Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

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Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat Criticizes U.S. Mideast Peace Effort

LD1305210691 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 13 May 91

[Speech by PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat in Lusaka on 11 May—read by announcer]

[Text] Dear Brother Dr. Kaunda; dear brother presidents and heads of delegations; dear comrades in the same trench, in the African National Congress [ANC], and the Pan-Africanist Congress [PAC]; greetings.

I thank you for giving me the opportunity to take part in this important meeting, which is considered great support for and assistance to us, especially in these important, fateful, and sensitive circumstances through which we are passing in the region after the end of the Gulf war.

We need this support because all the conspiracy is focusing on the attempt to liquidate the Palestinian people and the Palestinian cause, as well as to Judaize the holy Christian and Islamic places on the road to building and setting up a Greater Israel. They are benefiting from the results of this crazy war that took place in the Gulf. According to a seminar held at Georgetown University in the United States two weeks ago, Arab losses were $438 billion as a result of this war. Imagine this amount, which could have covered all the economic problems of the Third World. But, this war was part of the conspiracy against all the region, and against our peoples.

No doubt this war has left deep divisions and profound wounds in the body of our Arab nation, and also between the Arab nation and the Western states. We need great efforts to bypass and transcend them. I would like to tell you that despite this we have been able to quickly retrieve joint Arab action. It is not as before, but we have been able to make starts on this road. We have convened an important meeting of the Arab League at the delegate level and in a few days time the Arab League Council will be convened at the ministerial level with the participation of all the Arab states.

The Maghreb states that took no part in the war played an important role in bringing back Arab cohesiveness and we, as the PLO, are working with them and with our other brothers to recover this cohesiveness.

Oil is now being controlled by the Americans as a result of the Gulf war.

As you know, the West refused to link the Gulf crisis and the Palestinian cause. From the beginning we called for the withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait. As you know, Your Excellency, I gave you our initiative, the first article of which stated: the withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait. It was an initiative concluded with nine Arab states. But I would like to stress to you that we have been and still are with Iraq against the foreign aggression it is facing, just as we were with Egypt during the tripartite aggression against it. We also sided with Libya against the U.S. aggression and also with all Arab and friendly states that are facing any foreign aggression.

What is regrettable is that as a result of this war two Arab states, Iraq and Kuwait, have been destroyed. Therefore, we were against this war from the beginning. We worked alongside you, Mr. President, and alongside a number of leaders in Africa toward halting the war [word indistinct] its repercussions, including oil fires in Kuwait and the oil slick in the Gulf, in addition to ecological, living, economic, social [word indistinct] catastrophes that we are still enduring.

Immediately after the crisis they began to talk about solving the Arab-Israeli conflict. But they cannot do so without tackling the nucleus of this conflict in the region: the Palestinian cause. The aim of the U.S. Administration now is to help normalize Arab- Israeli relations, but it needs a Palestinian cover in order to let this plan through. But what does this serious plan give us, the Palestinians?

Following the end of the war President Bush announced the following points on 6 March 1991 to the U.S. Congress: 1. territory for peace; 2. implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338; 3. Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories; 4. the legitimate political rights of the Palestinian people; and 5. Israel's security.

At the time, we stated that such an initiative had positive points. We officially and publicly welcomed it. Nevertheless, through Baker's shuttle visits to the region it has become clear that they are working contrary to what President Bush announced. They said no to self-determination for the Palestinian people, no to the independent Palestinian state, no to the international conference, and no to PLO participation.

They insist on holding a regional conference. Why? Because it has no international foundation; whereas the international conference boasts a significant basis, which is international legitimacy and UN resolutions. They try to bypass the PLO and meet personalities from inside the occupied land in the hope of marginalizing the PLO. Faced with our firm Palestinian union, however, inside and outside the occupied land, the Palestinian national figures refused to meet them without prior official consent from the PLO. The three delegations who met Baker showed him the PLO's written instructions regarding its consent to these meetings.

Unfortunately, the U.S. Administration is trying to isolate, exclude, and ignore Holy Jerusalem, an Israeli demand to which the United States has unfortunately committed itself. Even brother Faysal al-Husayni, who heads negotiations, is approved by the United States not because he is from Jerusalem, but because he lives in a house in Rammallah.

We are facing the formidable and grave immigration of Jews from the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and Africa, who will number 3 million within approximately five years.

They want to give us an autonomous government which does not lead to an independent state, and through all that they plan to absorb everything within the three-year period of that autonomous rule: land, water, sovereignty, and Islamic and Christian sanctities.

We have good brotherly relations with Jordan and Egypt; and we have begun contacts with Lebanon, Syria, and Saudi Arabia. We have faced financial problems. The financial problem resulting from the unfortunate cessation of Gulf aid—as if they are punishing the people and the intifadah—still remains. For us, the question is not financial. It is one of principles and a sacred land for which we fight and struggle.

Europe has a different and distinct stance. They are for the international conference and for the right to self-determination. Some Europeans talk of an independent state. They are also for the participation of the PLO. The divergence was clear between the Americans and the Europeans during the Bush-Mitterrand summit in Martinique. This European stance was also confirmed at the news conference held by Mitterrand and Gorbachev.

This clearly shows that our friends are still numerous and include China, Europe, Japan, you here in Africa, Islamic countries, and nonaligned countries. We also possess a strong and continuous source, which is our people's blessed intifadah aimed at ending the Israeli occupation and establishing our independent Palestinian state with holy Jerusalem as its capital.

The intifadah continues to grow with powerful strength and thrust, despite the heavy casualties which are still being sustained by our people and which have reached [words indistinct] martyrs, 98,000 prisoners and detainees in the jails and detention centers of the occupation, 92,000 wounded, over 7,000 cases of miscarriage resulting from the use of internationally prohibited gases, and over 6,000 wounded who are disabled for life. This is the price of freedom paid by our people; and they defend, struggle, and resist in defense of their homeland and its Islamic and Christian sanctities.

Despite all that [illegible] people will continue their blessed intifadah and just struggle so as to bring about a just and durable peace in the land of peace, the land of blessed Palestine.

Your Excellency the brother President, beloved brother presidents, we thank you and prize your support for we who are in need. We are certain that we will tangibly feel it anew—as we have done in the past—at the next African summit which will be held in Abuga, the [new] capital of sister Nigeria.

Brothers, permit me to address my words to my friends and brothers in the single trench struggle: The ANC and PAC, to whom we extend our hands and offer our modest potential in their struggle and our joint struggle against racial discrimination, racism, and occupation. I say to you all that Africa has two issues. One in the south, namely the issue of the struggle of the people of South Africa against the apartheid system and racial discrimination. The second is in the northern part of the African continent: Palestine.

I say to you: Palestine is an African issue. Our pledge to you is that we will continue our revolution and our resistance and our uprising until the banner of our revolution flies over holy Jerusalem and the walls of Jerusalem and the minarets of Jerusalem and the churches of Jerusalem.

Thank you very much. Together until victory.

'Arafat To Stress 'Independent' Participation

JN1305191791 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1700 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] The meeting between PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat and Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh in Geneva tomorrow is now definite. According to Palestinian sources in Tunis, 'Arafat will stress the need for the participation of an independent Palestinian delegation, from inside and outside the occupied territories, in the hoped-for peace conference. Observers believe that choosing Geneva as the venue reflects the PLO's intent to emphasize its independent authority and its desire to be a full partner to any peace negotiations. The initial date set for the 'Arafat-Bessmertnykh meeting in Amman was canceled for technical reasons, as was officially announced.

While the PLO attaches importance to the role the USSR may play to find a just solution to the Palestine question, PLO Executive Committee Member Jamal al-Surani said the United States will be held responsible for the failure of efforts to hold a peace conference on the Middle East. He accused Washington of acting against international legitimacy.

Meanwhile, Nayif Hawatimah, secretary general of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, called on Palestinians in the occupied territories to engage in a general and comprehensive strike on the occasion of U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's visit to Israel tomorrow to show that the PLO remains the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

PLO Official Views Representation at Conference

JN1305195291 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1804 GMT 13 May 91

[Interview with 'Abd-al-Latif Abu-Hijlah, alias Abu-Ja'far, director of the PLO Political Department, by Mustafa Bakri in Cairo; date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Bakri] Mr. 'Abd-al-Latif Abu-Hijlah, director of the PLO's Political Department: What is the PLO's

position now on the current efforts to settle the Arab-Israeli conflict, particularly the proposal to convene a regional conference for peace in the region?

[Abu-Hijlah] In its latest session in Tunis, the PLO Central Council defined this clearly. The statement issued by the Central Council said the PLO welcomes and will make every effort to render success to any initiative or proposal for a just political settlement in the Middle East—based on and within the framework of international legitimacy. As regards the regional or non-regional conference, the PLO does not care about the name or the form of the conference unless it affects the substance. As long as the conference is based on international legitimacy and is held within the framework of the United Nations, give it any name you want.

[Bakir] Do we understand, then, that you agree with the initiative proposed by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker?

[Abu-Hijlah] No. We do not agree with it at all. This is due to many reasons. Baker is working in the dark. What Baker wants is unknown, officially and clearly. He searches for a means to reconcile the parties concerned. But, he faces major problems in doing so, particularly in his attempts to bypass the PLO and major participants in any conference convened for that end, such as the United Nations and the European countries, for example. Therefore, what is said and rumored about Baker's efforts so far contradicts this. [not further identified] The positions we see from certain Arab states make us cast doubts on those efforts.

[Al-Bakri] Abu-Ja'far, the issue of Palestinian representation has been one of the most important issues discussed by Baker and Bessmertnykh in their final talks today in Cairo. What is the minimum level you will accept in terms of Palestinian representation?

[Abu-Hijlah] For many long years, many forces have tried to bypass the Palestinian people. These forces have also tried to bypass the Palestinian people's legitimate representative, the PLO. Our people inside the occupied territories have clearly and frankly said this to Mr. Baker himself. We do not believe in or feel fanatical about words. What concerns us is the substance. What concerns us is that our people will be properly represented—all our people, the Palestinian people inside the occupied territories and the diaspora. The PLO is recognized by over 100 states as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. The Soviet Union is one of these states. Egypt, Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon, which are the parties concerned with the settlement, are also among those states. Therefore, what concerns us in the end is that these people will be represented by their real representative, the PLO. But the details of this can be discussed. The details can be discussed, provided they do not depart from the principle that the PLO is the Palestinian people's representative. When Baker meets our people's representatives in the occupied territory, they tell him this frankly and publicly. They also show him the written instructions they have received—instructions signed by brother Yasir 'Arafat. Baker knows this.

[Al-Bakri] But does this mean you would agree to participate in a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation?

[Abu-Hijlah] We have not discussed this yet. But in the latest PLO Central Council meeting, we called for a five-party Arab meeting to be attended by the Arab parties concerned—Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and the PLO. In our opinion, such a meeting must be convened so that the Arab parties can discuss all the issues of concern to us all, and so that we can discuss how and on what basis we would go to that conference.

[Bakri] Abu-Ja'far, the Palestinian issue was somewhat absent in the Baker-Bessmertnykh talks. My question is: Why has Bessmertnykh's meeting with Yasir 'Arafat been postponed more than once, and can this meeting actually take place?

[Abu-Hijlah] As far as I know, brother Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] is going to meet with Bessmertnykh within hours. I do not know if there was any change during the past few hours, but he is scheduled to meet with him within the coming hours. As for the discussions between Baker and Bessmertnykh, you say that the subject of Palestinian representation was absent. Despite the fact that I was not with them, I assure you that this subject cannot be absent from any meeting between Baker and Bessmertnykh, or any international official who talks about the Middle East issue. To accept or reject PLO representation is a different matter, but they absolutely cannot ignore this topic.

[Bakri] Baker yesterday said following the first round of his talks with Bessmertnykh that Yitzhaq Shamir, or the Israeli Government, has implicitly approved Resolution 242. To be more accurate, he said that all parties approve of 242, but he added that there are certain differences in interpreting this resolution and that discussions would eventually lead to the desired solution. Do you really think that Israel can approve this resolution, and in what sense?

[Abu-Hijlah] The truth is that Shamir's statement yesterday left no room for argument about the interpretation of 242. Shamir said that he does not approve the principle of exchanging land for peace. This denial and rejection is more detrimental to the peace process than merely rejecting 242. This is what was reported by radio networks and news agencies yesterday citing Shamir. But if Baker knows something other than this, then this is a different issue. This is what Shamir declared publicly to the whole world.

[Bakri] To what extent do you think there is a possibility that Syria will participate in a settlement? On what basis can Syria participate in a peace settlement now?

[Abu-Hijlah] I do not think that Syria will accept anything that is not accepted by other Arabs. The Arab

position is almost the same. Egypt recognizes the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Similarly, Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon subscribe to this. Egypt is asking for UN representation and that the settlement be within the framework of the United Nations. Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan are also asking for the same thing. Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan have all recognized the State of Palestine. There are no wide differences among Arab views. But Syria is a special case, and its territory is still occupied, like that of the Palestinians. It is therefore very much concerned about verbalizing some aspects of its stance, like the need for UN presence and for the settlement to be within the framework of the United Nations on the basis of international legitimacy. We in the PLO have been stressing these points.

[Bakri] Abu-Ja'far, to what degree could the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] countries' position adopted the day before yesterday, to attend a peace conference, even as observers, affect positively or negatively the peace process?

[Abu-Hijlah] In fact, I was surprised and astonished by this position, because there was no previous information to this effect. What really surprised me was the speed and timing of this decision. No Arab party to date has said that it agrees or that other parties have agreed to the principles of convening the conference or the participants of the conference. As far as I know, the two superpowers, the United States and the USSR, will invite other parties to this conference. Have the GCC countries received an invitation to declare their agreement? According to my information, no invitation has been sent thus far to them or to anyone else.

[Bakri] Then how do you explain this step?

[Abu-Hijlah] It is still early for us to define the motives behind this step.

[Bakri] Finally, Abu-Ja'far, what about Egyptian-Palestinian relations? What course are they following now?

[Abu-Hijlah] Egypt is an Arab country—in fact, the biggest Arab country. We have always sought to establish the best relations between the PLO and the Arab Republic of Egypt. But it is deeply regrettable that unfortunate developments took place in recent months, which everyone knows about. These developments created a deep, serious rift in Arab ranks. But the Arabs soon will be reunited by their mutual interests, and will restore their understanding and solidarity. This is what is happening now between the PLO and the Arab Republic of Egypt.

[Bakri] Thank you.

DFLP Leader Decries U.S. Role in Peace Talks

LD1405120991 Algiers APS in Arabic 0830 GMT 14 May 91

[Text] Algiers, 14 May (APS)—Mr. Nayif Hawatimah, secretary general of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine [DFLP], has stated that the Middle East was currently going through a flurry of diplomatic activity marked by the recent tours of U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, several European political figures, and lately Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh with a view to finding a solution to the Middle East problem and its core, the Palestinian issue.

At a news conference at the DFLP's office in Algiers yesterday, Mr. Hawatimah indicated that "these efforts came as a result of the Gulf war, during which Iraq was destroyed in the name of international legality. This is why the United States and its allies find themselves in a difficult position with regard to the Middle East issue now that the Gulf war is over." Mr. Hawatimah added that the successive visits by James Baker—who is currently and for the fourth time running through the Middle East - fell within that framework. He went on to say, "At the moment there is no unified international position on the Middle East problem, for the United States wants a U.S. solution within the framework of the Camp David accords, which guarantees its own interests and its hegemony over the region by calling for a regional peace conference on the Middle East. Such a conference would grant the Palestinian people only autonomy under occupation... The U.S. solution is based on two aspects: The first is the holding of bilateral negotiations between Israel and every Arab state separately in implementation of a policy of two-track rapprochement. The second aspect of the U.S. solution is centered on the holding of negotiations between Palestinians and Israel, and here the United States preferes the Palestinian delegation to be constituted by representatives of the population of the West Bank and Gaza Strip and not representatives of the PLO."

Mr. Hawatimah also said, "This solution would be put forward at a regional conference the United States is calling for, which would be held in Cairo under the patronage of both Washington and Moscow. Such a conference would then turn into mere bilateral geographical committees between each of the Arab states and Israel." The Palestinian leader added that "in contrast with the U.S. solution many European states, the Soviet Union, and China would like an international solution to the problem based on international legality." He went on to say, "The PLO for its part would like an international solution and not a U.S. one within the framework of an international peace conference under UN auspices and with the participation of the five members of the Security Council and not just the United States and the Soviet Union. The organization [PLO] is also demanding the implementation of the resolutions of international legality which are based on the principle of territory for peace, Israel's withdrawal from all territories after 1967, and the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination."

Radio Criticizes GCC Support for U.S. Moves

LD1405095691 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 13 May 91

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] The Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] communique in support of current U.S. efforts to settle the Middle East crisis—and in which the council expressed readiness to participate in any regional conference as an observer—was neither a coincidence nor a usual concluding statement produced by ordinary political meetings.

Some Western media interpreted the GCC communique as part of a series of lures placed before Israel by Washington to convince it to cooperate with U.S. efforts. For example, they considered the visit of Soviet Foreign Minister Bessmertnykh an example of this U.S. effort. Besides, the GCC announcement to participate in a pace conference meets the expectations of Tel Aviv's rulers for obtaining a great economic and financial price in exchange for every step on the path of settlement.

No one objects to the Gulf states' desire to support Baker's peace efforts. There are questions, however, about the role that the GCC countries will play on the Arab scene after the end of the Gulf war. Some hold the view that this role increasingly goes toward adhering to U.S. policy in the Middle East, which became apparent through Cheney's latest visit designed to lay down security arrangements in the Gulf region.

Reports from the Egyptian capital, together with the U.S. media, expressed the belief that the Gulf states are now mainly heading for a link-up with the West at the expense of their Arab ties, which forced the Egyptian president to make the decision of withdrawing the Egyptian forces from Saudi Arabia and the Gulf, a decision that contradicts the orientations of the Damascus Declaration.

The GCC communique, which was issued in Luxembourg following the meeting with the EEC, provides clear-cut evidence of the Gulf states' preference for participation in efforts for a peaceful settlement of the Palestinian and Arab question through the U.S. gate, not through the Arab League's or any other gate. True, James Baker holds in his hands more cards of temptation for Israel. But it is equally true that most of those cards were withdrawn from Palestinian, Syrian, Jordanian, and Lebanese hands.

While the GCC countries support U.S. efforts and place their financial and oil power in the hands of Washington, they alternatively cease their financial support to the Palestinians and tighten their economic siege on them and the frontline states, especially Jordan. This weakens the Arab position in the current process of settlement.

In any case, the general feature of the dominating policy on the Arab scene is contempt for the will of the nation, the will of the Palestinians, and their stance on settlement and conditions offered for it. This makes betting and gambling dominate those sides that believe through financial and economic pressure it is possible to impose a humiliating settlement and unjust solutions, such as was the case in the Gulf crisis.

The truth is that the strength of the Palestinian question resides in its nature, which is sacred to every Arab. Shamir can announce that he will not give up Jerusalem or one inch of the West Bank and Gaza. On the other hand, he will not find one Arab who will give up Jerusalem or an inch of Palestinian land, even if the conflict goes on for another thousand years.

Egypt

Soviet Foreign Minister Comments, Departs

NC1305154091 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1307 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] Cairo, 13 May (MENA)—Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh left Cairo for Saudi Arabia this afternoon after a four-day visit to Egypt during which he met with President Husni Mubarak and Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister. He also held two rounds of talks with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker on ways to promote the Mideast peace process. He was seen off at the airport by Dr. Butrus Ghali, minister of state for foreign affairs.

Bessmertnykh described his meeting with James Baker as good and effective and said that they discussed the anticipated Middle East peace conference. He said they reviewed the possibility of convening an ongoing conference, in which the parties would meet, form separate working groups, and then meet again.

In an exclusive statement to NOVOSTI, Bessmertnykh added that UN and European participation in the conference appears likely. He said that, in the event an international Mideast peace conference is convened, a special working team will be formed to study all issues connected with regional security, economic development, and the sharing of water and natural resources. Such issues cannot be solved on the bilateral level and are better addressed in a regional framework. He said only two or three issues still need to be resolved before a conference can be convened, whereas before, there were many, and the parties concerned were far from agreement.

Baker, 'Abd-al-Majid View Talks, Regional Issues

NC1305161591 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1400 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, and U.S. Secretary of State James Baker have held a joint news conference. Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid welcomed the U.S. secretary of state to Egypt and described talks with President Husni Mubarak as very fruitful.

He added: We all came out of these meetings satisfied with the progress that has been made to date regarding the peace process.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid explained that some problems still exist, but they can be surmounted. He said that efforts will be made to this end.

He said: We are very determined to continue the peace process in the region. We appreciate the efforts made by the United States and Secretary Baker, who has made numerous shuttle trips to achieve this aim. We hope that the peace objective will be realized by this American determination. This matter concerns us all.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid added that President Mubarak has been briefed on the U.S. efforts. He added: We will continue to work together until a peace conference, which will be good for all the region's countries, is convened.

The U.S. secretary of state made a statement in which he thanked Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid and said that the Arab League could not have made a better choice in selecting him as its secretary general in light of the respect he enjoys and his professionalism. Mr. Baker also thanked President Mubarak for issuing the invitation for the tripartite meeting.

He said: Together we will seek to convene a peace conference which can resolve the Palestinian and Middle East issues.

He added that all issues connected with its convening must be resolved satisfactorily for it to be held. He noted that Egypt has made and continues to make very effective efforts to resolve some of these issues.

Responding to a question about an Israeli radio report that the U.S. secretary of state and the Soviet foreign minister will issue invitations to five countries, not including Palestine, to attend the peace conference, Baker replied that discussions are continuing about what form Palestinian representation will take and whether there will be an independent Palestinian delegation, one that is part of an overall Arab delegation, or a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. He said this decision will be made by the concerned parties, that is the Palestinians and the concerned Arab countries, in the event the delegation is going to be part of an overall Arab delegation. He explained that in case a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation is formed, Jordan will make the decision.

When asked about the major obstacles to peace, Baker said that the major disagreements revolve around the role the United Nations will play at the peace conference and whether it will meet only once or will be an ongoing conference with the consent of all the parties. The U.S. secretary of state added that the Syrian and Israeli stands are different and our task and duty is to bring them closer. He added: I do not want to give the impression that all the issues have been resolved. But I said in this very place on a previous occasion that no one can impose peace on all the parties. One party is saying that the United Nations must not participate in the peace conference at all and that the conference must be limited to one session or one term with no possibility of reconvening. Another party is saying that the United Nations must fully participate in the conference which must be held more than once and periodically.

The U.S. secretary of state said he is optimistic. He noted that there must be a way in which these two issues can be resolved and this might happen through Egypt's good offices.

On Egypt's role in this regard, Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid said he believes that Egypt will seek to assist the U.S.

secretary of state to reach solutions to these two issues so that the peace conference will begin in a way favorable to all the parties.

Baker Departs Cairo

NC1405100291 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0930 GMT 14 May 91

[Text] Cairo, 14 May (MENA)—U.S. Secretary of State James Baker left Cairo this morning at the conclusion of a two-day visit to Egypt.

Mubarak-Baker-Bessmertnykh Meeting 'Historic'

NC1405080991 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0335 GMT 14 May 91

[From the press review]

[Text] In an article titled "The Historic Meeting and the Credibility of Peace," AL-JUMHURIYAH says that the world's attention is on Cairo to see how it will follow up the results of the historic tripartite meeting between President Husni Mubarak, U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, and his Soviet counterpart, Aleksandr Bessmertnykh.

Observers see the meeting as a culmination of sincere and extensive efforts which Egypt began and is continuing in search of Middle East peace. There is no doubt, writes the paper, that the Cairo meeting underlines the two superpowers' responsibility in the new international order and their eagerness to achieve stability in the Middle East because of their awareness of the region's historic and strategic importance. The meeting also sends a message to all parties of the significance of the ongoing efforts, as demonstrated by the fact that Baker is making his fourth tour of the region and that Bessmertnykh wants a clear role for his country in the proposed peace conference to ensure its effectiveness and adherence to international legitimacy. The continuation of these efforts at such influential levels shows that the international community learned an important lesson from the Gulf crisis and the war for the liberation of Kuwait; namely, that there is no alternative to backing international legitimacy and resolutions as an important foundation for the new world order.

The paper adds that all the parties to the conflict must realize that the ongoing international efforts constitute an overwhelming amount of credibility that must not be blocked. On the contrary, this endeavor must be taken advantage of as a realistic opportunity to achieve peace. The paper emphasizes that while the Arabs have realized this fact and offered several goodwill gestures, Shamir's government must also realize this fact and do away with the one-upmanship, intransigence, and rejections of all proposals even before elections started. As U.S. Secretary Baker said, it is agreed that the talks will be held on the basis of UN Resolutions 242 and 338, but each each party interprets them differently. Therefore, the purpose of the talks is to reach a definite interpretation of these resolutions, and we believe that among the topics on the Cairo meeting agenda is to work out a draft interpretation of these resolutions on the basis of the territory-for-peace principle.

Mubarak Meets Soviet Legislative Delegation

NC1305120491 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1025 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] Cairo, 13 May (MENA)—This morning President Husni Mubarak met at the Presidential Office in Heliopolis with a delegation from the Soviet Council of Nationalities led by Council Chairman Rafik Nishanov, who is currently visiting Cairo. The meeting was attended by People's Assembly Speaker Dr. Ahmad Fathi Surur; Dr. Muhammad 'Abdallah, chairman of the People's Assembly's Foreign Relations Committee; and Vladimir Polyakov, Soviet ambassador in Cairo.

Speaking after the session, the head of the Soviet delegation said they discussed topics related to the Middle Eastern situation, and they hoped for combined efforts to achieve a peaceful settlement in the region. The head of the Soviet delegation hoped that bilateral relations between the two countries will be further promoted.

Dr. Surur said the Soviet delegation members expressed their appreciation of President Mubarak's positive role in achieving peace and that the discussion with President Mubarak came within this context. He noted that the People's Assembly is eager to hold meetings with world parliamentarians in order to consolidate ties and establish a fruitful political dialogue between the Egyptian people and the other peoples.

Lebanese Foreign Minister Buwayz Arrives

NC1305161291 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1216 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] Cairo, 13 May (MENA)—Lebanese Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz arrived in Cairo this afternoon on a three-day visit to Egypt, during which he will attend the Arab League Ministerial Council meeting. He will also hold talks with Egyptian officials on the latest developments in Lebanon, the implementation of the al-Ta'if accord, and the restoration of security and stability there.

Upon arrival, Lebanese Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz said that the United States has promised that U.S. Secretary of State James Baker will discuss the issue of southern Lebanon and the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 425 during his talks with Israeli officials.

Buwayz added that Israel must not miss this opportunity to establish peace and security throughout the region and must abide by all UN Security Council resolutions.

Buwayz said that Egypt's influence on the world political scene enables it to play a key role in the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 425.

Regarding conditions in Lebanon, Buwayz said that his country has started to recover its strength and prestige, the situation has improved considerably, and security and stability have returned.

Buwayz was met at the airport by Dr. Fu'ad Iskandar, minister of state for emigration and Egyptians abroad affairs; As'ad al-As'ad, acting secretary general of the Arab League; and 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Sulh, Lebanese ambassador in Cairo.

Foreign Ministers Comment on Talks

NC1305205091 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1944 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] Cairo, 13 May (MENA)—Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, has emphasized the need to implement UN Security Council Resolution 425 on Lebanon. He added that Egypt is exerting every effort with the parties concerned to secure the implementation of this resolution and Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon.

In a statement following talks with Lebanese Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz this evening, he said that Egypt hopes that peace and stability will be restored in Lebanon and is following current developments there with interest. He expressed Egypt's satisfaction at the Lebanese Government's assumption of its responsibilities.

Regarding Egypt's position on the recent negotiations between U.S. Secretary of State James Baker and Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh, Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid affirmed that Egypt's position is clear. Egypt is interested in convening a peace conference and initiating dialogue among the parties concerned. He said that efforts are currently under way to overcome existing obstacles.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid said that Lebanon has an interest in finding a just and comprehensive solution to the Palestinian issue and in anything that can promote stability and peace in the region. He noted that the Lebanese foreign minister's visit to Egypt confirms the soundness of Egyptian-Lebanese relations.

Lebanese Foreign Minister Buwayz stated that the talks dealt with regional and international issues as well as UN Security Council Resolution 425. Lebanon, he said, insists on the implementation of this resolution as soon as possible to facilitate the extension of Lebanese sovereignty throughout Lebanese territory and the implementation of the al-Ta'if agreement, which is supported by Arab and foreign states.

The Lebanese foreign minister praised Egyptian-Lebanese relations and said that the talks dealt with ways to strengthen and develop them.

Buwayz Meets With Baker

NC1305165591 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1423 GMT 13 May 91

[Excerpt] Cairo, 13 May (MENA)—U.S. Secretary of State James Baker and Lebanese Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz held a meeting at Baker's suite at the Semiramis Hotel in Cairo this afternoon. The meeting dealt with the situation in the Middle East in general and in Lebanon in particular in light of the government's extension of its authority throughout the country within the framework of the al- Ta'if accord. That accord was endorsed by all Lebanese parties and approved by Arab and foreign forces. According to diplomatic sources, Buwayz stressed the importance of implementing Security Council Resolution 425, which provides for Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon. [passage omitted]

Cairo Media Continue To Criticize Israeli Moves

'Opportunistic Attitude' Seen

NC1305104791 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0335 GMT 13 May 91

[From the press review]

[Text] In a column entitled "An Opportunist Attitude," Husayn 'Abd-al-Wahid writes in AL-AKHBAR that Israel's opportunism has always been to blame for blocking mediation efforts and shattering hopes for peace in the Middle East.

From the Israeli viewpoint, the question was never one of a desire to give back rights it had usurped in exchange for a peace settlement. Rather, it was a question of more gains and ambitions, plus a peaceful settlement. This opportunistic attitude still governs Israel's views on U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's ongoing efforts. The clearest evidence of this is Israel's reaction to the proposed participation of the Gulf states in a peace conference. The six member states of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] have expressed readiness to attend part of the conference as observers to be represented by one person—the GCC secretary general. Israel welcomed the participation of the Gulf Arabs and even demanded that they participate in all stages of the conference and that each state be represented by an independent representative. This means the conference will include delegations from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates [UAE], Qatar, Bahrain, and Oman.

The writer goes on to say that this Israeli welcome must make us suspicious. This is because Israel raised hell to keep the Palestinian participation to the minimum, although the issue concerns the Palestinians the most. Furthermore, Israel expressed strong reservations about the participation of more influential and prestigious parties in the conference, specifically, the Soviet Union and the UN. Thus, today when Israel opens all the doors to the Gulf Arabs, it is necessary to pause to try to understand the significance of this Israeli flexibility.

'Abd-al-Wahid points out that Israel believes that the participation of the Gulf states in the conference means an end to the Arab boycott, as well as the Gulf states' recognition of Israel in exchange for nothing. Israel dreams of the Gulf markets and wants a share of Arab oil money. In addition, the Israelis want to convince the world that their conflict with the Arabs is one thing and the Palestinian issue another. The dialogue with the Arab Gulf states will serve as evidence of Israel's viewpoint. This makes it a very serious dialogue, because it will be held in an atmosphere of unprecedented Arab frustration and fragmentation.

Seeks Gains in Return for Settlement

NC1305163491 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1140 GMT 13 May 91

[Commentary by Bahiy al-Din Shu'ayb: "What is the Price of Peace in the Region?"]

[Text] Prior to U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's arrival in Israel, Israeli Prime Minister Shamir made a statement reiterating that Israel will not relinquish Jerusalem or any inch of Eretz Yisra'el. To begin with we must understand that any inch of Eretz Yisra'el means the West Bank, Gaza, and the Golan Heights—the Arab territories which Israel occupied in its 1967 aggression. This assertion comes at an important time. It is a message to the U.S. secretary of state that the territory-for-peace principle is totally unacceptable and, hence, the essence of James Baker's negotiations with Israeli leaders has no significance because the U.S. activity revolves on the principle of trading territory for peace.

In another development, Israeli circles reacted to the Gulf countries' decision to participate in a peace conference as observers with some disdain. The director of Yitzhaq Shamir's office stated that this participation will contribute nothing to the peace process. He hinted, nevertheless, at some of the thoughts Israel harbors in connection with the Gulf countries by adding that such participation will not benefit Israel as long as the Gulf countries continue their economic boycott.

In our view, this allusion to the Gulf economic boycott of Israel is connected with one of the main features of the U.S. movement toward peace. Without a doubt, when the United States introduced the Gulf card as an impetus toward convening a regional peace conference, it was insinuating—through behind-the-scenes talks—that the rearrangement of the region after the Gulf crisis would entail actual Israeli participation in the proposed security system and that if Israel refrained from participating in resolving the Middle East crisis, it might find itself barred from any real participation with all the difficult consequences that might ensue and which might not be favorable to Israel. If it went along, however, and handled the Arab-Israeli conflict cleverly, it would find all the doors open towards a real Israeli presence in the region as an effective and active partner in all security and economic endeavors.

The Gulf region, which requires reconstruction, needs Israeli technology in this reconstruction now and in the future. It is clear that Yitzhaq Shamir is cunningly trying to ignore all the U.S. attempts, particularly those based on opening prospects of Israeli-Gulf economic interaction. Hence, immediately before James Baker's arrival in Israel, Shamir announced that Israel would never tire from holding fast to its position, even if it was forced to spend an eternity defending its rights.

Yitzhaq Shamir, a hard-liner, fully realizes that Washington wants the Middle East crisis to be resolved so that it will be able to formulate an appropriate security system in the region and to establish a new international order, of which the United States will be the pivot. Hence, a settlement is coming. The hard-line Israeli stance is merely an attempt to obtain the greatest possible regional gains. It is clear that all the signs indicate that the steps of the settlement are coming. The disagreement is about how much Israel will get in return for embarking on peaceful coexistence with the Arabs.

Attitude 'Obstacle' to Relations

PM1405084391 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 8 May 91 p 1

[Report by 'Abdal-Nabi 'Abd-al-Sattar: "Egypt Refuses To Normalize Relations With Israel"]

[Text] Egypt has rejected an Israeli request for the implementation of all the cooperation agreements concluded between Cairo and Tel Aviv, for the normalization of informational, cultural, agricultural, commercial, and political relations, and for encouragement to other Arab parties to conclude peace agreements with Israel along the lines of the Camp David agreement. In its reply, Cairo emphasized that the current Israeli Government's attitude was an obstacle to Egyptian-Israeli rapprochement.

Egypt also rejected an Israeli request for it to intercede and persuade the Palestinian leaderships in the occupied Arab territories to stop the people's intifadah in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

AL-WAFD has learned that, in a recent message conveyed to President Mubarak by Egypt's Ambassador to Israel Muhammad Basyuni, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir called on Egypt to urgently appeal to the Palestinians in the occupied territories to stop what he called the acts of violence to give political solutions more chance, and he also called on Egypt to contact the Arab states to discuss ways of providing Arab aid to improve the living conditions of the Palestinians in the occupied territory. Egypt made that conditional on a change in the Israeli attitude toward the current efforts to end the Arab-Israeli conflict and on the achievement of progress in the peace process.

Bahrain

Kuwaiti Defense Minister Arrives for Talks

JN1205112191 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1010 GMT 12 May 91

[Excerpt] Manama, 12 May (WAKH)—Kuwaiti Defense Minister Major General Shaykh 'Ali Sabah al-Salim al-Sabah arrived in Manama at noon today on a visit to Bahrain. During his visit he will hold talks with senior officials in Bahrain on means to entrench existing bilateral relations, and the latest developments in the Gulf arena. [passage omitted]

Meets Amir, Premier

JN1205181491 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1300 GMT 12 May 91

[Excerpt] Manama, 12 May (WAKH)—Bahraini Amir His Highness Shaykh 'Isa Bin-Salman Al Khalifah and Prime Minister His Highness Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Salman Al Khalifah today received Kuwaiti Defense Minister Shaykh 'Ali Sabah al-Salim al-Sabah and his delegation.

During the meeting, the two sides exchanged views on regional issues following the liberation of Kuwait and matters related to the reconstruction of Kuwait. [passage omitted]

Kuwait

Diplomat Confirms Residence Permit Invalidation

LD0905113591 London KUNA in Arabic 1030 GMT 9 May 91

[Text] Amman, 9 May (KUNA)—Faysal al-Mukhayzim, the Kuwaiti charge d'affaires in Amman, has stated that the Kuwaiti Government has already issued an official communique announcing that all the residence permits granted to members of various nationalities before the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait are now invalid and that anyone wishing to obtain a new residence permit must apply to the competent authorities in Kuwait. This came in Mr. al-Mukhayzim's rely to a KUNA question following reports in some Jordanian papers that Jordan has not been officially informed about the invalidation of the residence permits of Jordanians who left Kuwait.

The Kuwaiti diplomat indicated that there were about 130 nationalities living in Kuwait and that the decision of the Kuwaiti Government is clear. There is no need, he said, to inform each of the countries whose nationals mostly left Kuwait after the Iraqi invasion. He added that the invalidation of the residence permits is not restricted to particular nationalities.

100 Oil Well Fires Reported Extinguished

LD1105135791 London KUNA in Arabic 1240 GMT 11 May 91

[Text] Kuwait city, 11 May (KUNA)—Kuwaiti Oil Minister Dr Hammud 'Abdallah al-Ruqbah announced that up until this morning 100 burning oil wells have been extinguished and brought under control. Dr al-Ruqbah said in a press statement that: "The number of wells which have been extinguished and brought under control up until this morning is 100." The minister added that efforts are still in full progress to bring the other burning wells under control. He expressed hope that the number of extinguished wells will increase daily.

His Highness the Kuwaiti heir apparent and prime minister, Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah recently inspected the operations of extinguishing and combatting oil fires resulting from the unjust Iraqi occupation. His highness surveyed the extent of the disaster and the efforts made by workers of Kuwait's Oil Company and international firms which specialize in fire-extinguishing.

It should be mentioned that Kuwait's loss as a result of the burning wells stands at around 6 million barrels a day.

Qatar

Foreign Minister Departs for GCC-EC Meeting

JN1005172691 Manama WAKH in English 1600 GMT 10 May 91

[Text] Doha, May 10, (GNA)—Qatari Foreign Minister Mubarak 'Ali al-Khatir left today for Luxembourg, leading Qatar's delegation to the joint ministerial meeting of the GCC and the EEC.

The QATAR NEWS AGENCY quoted the minister as saying that the meeting is part of coordination between the two groups to reach an agreement defining the basis of cooperation before the creation of the unified European Market next year.

He added that the meeting will discuss cooperation in the field of chemical industry, encouraging joint investments, and the possibility of reaching a free trade agreement. It will also discuss peace efforts in the Middle East and nuclear weapons disarmament in the region.

Saudi Arabia

Soviet Minister Bessmertnykh Arrives 13 May

LD1305211591 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Television Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 13 May 91

[Excerpt] His excellency the Soviet foreign minister and the delegation accompanying him arrived in Riyadh earlier today for a visit to the Kingdom.

His excellency was received on arrival by His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, foreign minister; Ambassador 'Abd-al-Rahman Bin-Muhammad al-Nuwaysir, Foreign Ministry head of protocol; and Mr. Gennadiy Tarasov, ambassador designate of the USSR to the Kingdom. [passage omitted]

Received by King Fahd

LD1305191691 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Television Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] At his office in Yamama Palace today, King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, custodian of the two holy mosques, received His Excellency Mr. Aleksandr Bessmertnykh, foreign minister of the Soviet Union, and the delegation accompanying him.

His Royal Highness Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, second deputy prime minister, minister of defense and aviation, and inspector general; His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, the foreign minister; His Excellency Mr. Muhammad Ibrahim Mas'ud, minister of state, member of the Council of Ministers, and acting minister of information; His Excellency Dr. 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Khuwaytir, minister of education and acting minister of higher education; and Mr. 'Abd-al-Rahman Mansuri, Foreign Ministry under secretary for political affairs, were also present a the meeting.

It was also attended by Mr. Gennadiy Tarasov, ambassador designate of the Soviet Union to the Kingdom.

Meets With Foreign Minister

LD1305212191 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Television Network in Arabic 13 May 91

[Excerpt] His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, the foreign minister, met this evening with His Excellency Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh, who is currently visiting the Kingdom. During the meeting they discussed political issues of interest to the two sides, primarily the Palestinian question and efforts currently under way to find a solution to it. They also reviewed bilateral relations and ways to strengthen them. [passage omitted]

Attends Banquet

LD1405125791 Riyadh SPA in English 1217 GMT 14 May 91

[Text] Riyadh, May 14, SPA—Foreign minister Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal hosted here Monday night a dinner in honor of visiting Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh and his accompanying delegation.

The banquet was attended by Prince Turki al-Faysal, education minister and acting higher education minister 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Khuwaytir, commerce Minister Dr. Sulayman al-Sulayyim, Labour and Social Affairs Minister Muhammad 'Ali al-Fayiz and Industry and Electricity Minister 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Zamil.

The banquet was attended by the Soviet ambassador to the kingdom and a number of ambassadors accredited to the kingdom.

Departs Kingdom 14 May

LD1405085191 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 0836 GMT 14 May 91

[Excerpt] Riyadh, 14 May (SPA)—His Excellency Aleksandr Bessmertnykh, the Soviet foreign minister, left Riyadh this morning following his visit the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. [passage omitted]

'Source' Denies Royal Visit to Jerusalem Planned

LD1305185391 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1815 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] Riyadh 13 May (SPA)—A responsible source has denied what Israeli radio broadcast yesterday morning—Sunday—quoting the newspaper HADASHOT as saying King Fahd will pay a visit to the city of Jerusalem in July.

According to a scenario presented by Israeli television last night, His Royal Highness Prince Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz will arrive in occupied Jerusalem on Wednesday on a private visit. In a statement to SPA today, the source added that such a scenario is no more than a scheme to mislead.

The source said in his statement that there is no truth whatsoever to what the Israeli media have claimed about these two reports, not to mention that these claims are ridiculous, as no mind can believe them and no logic can accept them.

Cabinet Meets, Rejects 'Erroneous' Interpretations

LD1305213191 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1752 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Excerpts] Riyadh, 13 May (SPA)—King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Sa'ud, custodian of the two holy mosques, chaired a Council of Ministers session at al-Yamamah Palace in Riyadh this afternoon.

After the meeting, Muhammad Ibrahim Mas'ud, minister of state, Cabinet member, and acting minister of information, stated that at the outset of the meeting King Fahd briefed the council on the result of the contacts that have taken place with U.S. President George Bush, Egyptian President Muhammad Husni Mubarak; and His Highness Shaykh 'Isa Bin-Salman Al Khalifah, the amir of Bahrain. He also briefed the council on the recent meetings with His Excellency British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd, Shaykh 'Ali al-Salim al-Sabah, Kuwaiti defense minister, who gave the king a message from the Kuwaiti Amir Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah, and His Excellencyh U.S. Defense Secretary Richad Cheney. [passage omitted]

The council stated that the grateful people of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will not forget this stance

and support. Clearly, the strong personal relations between King Fahd and his brother President Mubarak, as well as the solid and firm ties between the peoples of Saudi Arabia and Egypt, will remain always strong and cherished, and Saudi Arabia, should the need arise, will not hesitate to ask its sister country Egypt to support it and display solidarity with it.

For this reason, the council asserts that there is no truth in erroneous interpretations and explanations in which the news media have engaged. The council points out that these forces came at the request of Saudi Arabia, and that they are now returned home after having performed their mission in the best possible way. [passage omitted]

Iraqis Exchange Fire With UK Royal Marines

LD1305144591 London PRESS ASSOCIATION in English 1420 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] Royal Marines wounded at least two Iraqi soldiers in exchange of fire at Saddam Husayn's summer palace, BBC Radio correspondent in northern Iraq reported. Marines opened fire after Iraqis fired three times on their observation post, BBC said. Ministry of Defence confirmed exchange of shots after marine patrol was fired on. Spokesman added there were no British casualties.

Following the shooting, roadblocks were set up by the Marines, and helicopters mounted a search of the area but found nothing. The situation was reported to be very tense with a heavy allied military presence and Iraqis said to be moving up a heavy machine-gun into the area.

The incident happened at about 7:30 AM GMT—1:30 PM local time—said a Defence Ministry spokesman. Three rounds were fired at a Marine patrol "from one of the palaces below Ayn Shaykh," but no fire was returned. Soon afterwards, one high-velocity round was fired at the patrol from the same area but again no fire was returned. Five minutes later, two men emerged from the palace and began firing "long bursts" with automatic weapons, said the spokesman. "Fire was returned and the two men dropped out of sight."

He said it was unclear whether the men had been hit or had dived for cover. Shortly afterwards, two more shots were fired from the palace but were not returned.

The MoD [Ministry of Defense] said commanders at the scene were now assessing the situation and watching for further Iraqi activity. Sources said it remained unclear why the Iraqis had decided to fire on the British forces from 45 Commando. It is possible they were under orders to create an incident because of growing concern in Baghdad about the allies' continued presence in Iraq. Equally, the incident could be explained by a lack of control over the troops by senior officers when boredom took its toll. The British forces are under strict orders to maintain a low key military presence but have full authority to defend themselves. They are equipped with a wide variety of weapons, including 105mm artillery guns, mortars and SA80 rifles. Sources said the marines had returned fire with SA80s using single-shot fire rather than automatic bursts for accuracy and to conserve ammunition.

Saddam Husayn Visits Al-Khalis District 13 May

JN1305175891 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1738 GMT 13 May 91

[Excerpt] Baghdad, 13 May (INA)— His Excellency President Saddam Husayn has emphasized that Iraq sets great store by moral values, and that dignity for the men of Iraq matters more than anything.

During a visit to al-Khalis District, where he convened a meeting with state and party officials, tribal chiefs, and dignitaries of Diyali Governorate, his excellency said that all well-meaning people owe a debt for every word said at the right moment and every sword raised in the cause of the good name of al-Khalis.

At the outset of his visit to al-Khalis District, a list of requirements by the district was submitted to His Excellency President Saddam Husayn, including a peaceful life for the citizenry. [passage omitted]

Addressing the audience, the president said officials in Iran seem to be continuing their malice, and that their negative acts never stop.

How can people be so inconstant, he asked. We thought they had changed, and that they were beginning a new chapter with Iraq and the Iraqis. But we discovered that all this was actually part of a plan, and part of the intrigues for which such people are known.

President Saddam Husayn said: We believed that what the Iranians had been saying came from their hearts and minds. We thanked God that the impact of eight years of war between us had quickly vanished. But it became clear that all this was an act through which they were trying to get closer to the shooting point so that the shot would do damage; they believed the shot would be fatal, but God is greater than all tyrants, treacherous ones, and betrayers.

The president said the entire world, especially the big powers, that America is the No. 1 superpower. [sentence as received] They continued to celebrate what they termed victory over Iraq for three days. They came together with 30 states. On the other hand, when Iraq prevailed over the Iranian aggression, the Iraqis celebrated for one day only. The fact that they celebrated for three days, the president said, means that they found military victory over Iraq difficult.

Saddam Chairs Armed Forces Command Meeting

JN1305211791 Baghdad INA in Arabic 2102 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, 13 May (INA)—Staff Field Marshal President Saddam Husayn, commander in chief of the Armed Forces, presided over a meeting of the Armed Forces General Command tonight.

The meeting was attended by Staff General 'Izzat Ibrahim, deputy chairman of the Revolution Command Council and deputy commander in chief of the Armed Forces; Interior Minister 'Ali Hasan al-Majid; and Defense Minister Staff Lieutenant General Husayn Kamil Hasan.

Memo to UN Details 11-12 May U.S. Overflights

JN1305174891 Baghdad Iraqi Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] U.S. fighter planes have once again violated Iraqi airspace. Iraq's permanent representative at the United Nations said in a memorandum to UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar that on 11-12 May, U.S.

aircraft carried out four sorties divided into two formations. The planes flew at 720 km per hour at a low altitude. He explained that the U.S. planes, which came from Turkish airspace, flew over Mosul, Dahuk, and Zakho. They intended to carry out acts of reconaissance and provocation.

Letter to UN Protests Remarks by UK's Major

JN1405051891 Baghdad Iraqi Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0300 GMT 14 May 91

[Text] Foreign Minister Ahmad Husayn has affirmed that British Prime Minister John Major brings to mind the unjust British colonial policy which seeks hegemony and interference in the internal affairs of peoples.

In a letter he sent to the president of the UN Security Council yesterday, the foreign minister reviewed some aspects of the preconceived policies being pursued by some permanent members of the UN Security Council, including Britain, which seek to harm our noble Iraqi people.

The minister added: At a time when Iraq honestly honors its obligations as stipulated in the UN Security Council resolutions which it accepted, we, amazingly, continue to hear statements that are not in harmony with the content of these resolutions.

Ahmad Husayn went on to say: Among these statements are the sinister and impudent statements made by British Prime Minister John Major on 10 May 1991 during a speech he delivered at the Conservative Party conference in Scotland to the effect that Britain will not allow Iraq to rejoin the international community so long as President Saddam Husayn remains in power. In these statements, Major added that Britain will veto any attempt to mitigate the sanctions imposed on Iraq.

The foreign minister warned against this serious precedent in international relations which would cause, if it were to be endorsed, a total destruction of the components of the UN Charter and the obligations it enshrines. He added: We, the Iraqis, have a long history with the British colonial rule which oppressed our people for many long years, exploited our people's resources, and attempted to control our destiny. Now, the British prime minister reminds us of this unjust policy and shows a desire to choose for the Iraqi people a leader other than President Saddam Husayn. This is the right of the Iraqi people; it is not the right of the British ruler who should have shown some shame before making these ridiculous statements.

Ahmad Husayn urged members of the international community to firmly confront these dangerous tendencies which render interests and narrow-minded perspectives a constitution governing ties among world states in contravention of the principle of equality among states regarding the exercise of sovereignty and the freedom of peoples to choose the form of their political, economic, and social systems.

Ministers Address Assembly on Food Supply, Media

JN1305185591 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1616 GMT 13 May 91

[Addition to an item published in the 13 May Near East & South Asia DAILY REPORT, page 17, headlined "Hammadi Addresses Assembly."]

[Text] Baghdad, 13 May (INA)—The National Assembly members also heard answers and clarifications to their questions from the foreign minister and the ministers of trade, agriculture and irrigation, culture and information, higher education, and transport and communications.

Asked about the practical steps taken by his ministry to remedy the consequences of the aggression and provide for and increase the citizens' rations of foodstuffs, Trade Minister Muhammad Mahdi Salih stressed that in the coming phase, the ministry will continue to follow the method of importing without foreign transactions [tahwil khariji] to help meet the citizens' needs for basic commodities.

Agriculture and Irrigation Minister 'Abd-al-Wahhab Mahmud said his ministry's policy in the coming phase will concentrate on achieving Iraq's food security in accordance with set priorities; namely, to increase the cultivated areas horizontally and vertically by planting the basic wheat crops through the ideal use of irrigation water, and to utilize and cultivate the western desert and provide irrigation water by drilling wells. He said the ministry is serious about limiting and curbing the smuggling of sheep across the borders to preserve the national wealth and serve the national economy.

Replying to questions by assembly members on the role of the media, Culture and Information Minister Hamid Hammadi said: With our near-total reliance on the IRAQI NEWS AGENCY, a one-sided portrayal of events is a weakness. The minister indicated that the ministry is now working on a plan for radio and television transmission to once again cover all parts of Iraq come next July.

He said the ministry has prepared a comprehensive program ensuring a high level of performance by all media and their personnel. Hammadi said the recent advances made by journalism in the way of publication and democratization marks a positive development. The minister stressed that unsound criticism will fail to deflect us from pursuing our democratic principles. He pointed out that the Journalism Act, on which the government is now working, will ensure freedom of expression and fair competition.

Meanwhile, Dr. 'Abd-al-Razzaq al-Hashimi, minister of higher education and scientific research, reported on the status of higher education. He noted that all classes are progressing well at all levels and that major bottlenecks have been eliminated.

Ahmad 'Abd-al-Sattar al-Ma'ini, minister of transport and communications, reported to the assembly on the

projected improvement of ground transportation in Baghdad by introducing more vehicles.

He said the ministry has set in operation railway lines to certain governorates, and is now working on the completion of the Baghdad-al-Basrah line within the framework of its efforts to rehabilitate the bridges and railroads destroyed by the war.

The minister spoke about reconnecting telephone lines, now that damaged or partly damaged exchanges have been repaired. Work is now under way to reactivate the overseas telephone service via the coaxial cable and via microwave stations, which have not been spared bombing, the minister said.

The National Assembly is set to reconvene next Saturday to hear reports from other ministers.

Mass Grave Discovered Near Iranian Border 5 May

JN1405133391 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1220 GMT 14 May 91

[Text] Al-Basrah, 14 May (INA)—The Iraqi authorities have discovered a mass grave that contains the bodies of 105 Iraqi citizens who were killed by Iranian infiltrators. The grave is located 800 meters off the Iranian border in the Kut Sawadi area in al-Basrah Governorate.

This ugly massacre, which was committed by Iranian infiltrators between 24 and 27 April, was discovered by Iraqi military patrols on 5 May.

All the victims of this horrendous massacre, who were civilians and military personnel, had their hands tied behind their backs. Their limbs had been cut off and their eyes gouged out. Those criminal infiltrators, persisting in crime and rancor against whoever is Iraqi, piled up the bodies of those victims in two adjacent piles in an open area.

The Iranian infiltrators crossed the Iraqi border from the Shalamcheh area and took the victims to an area close to the Iranian border, where they opened fire on them from behind after tying their hands.

The Ministry of Culture and Information organized a tour yesterday for foreign television network and news agency correspondents to the scene to see the ugly crime that had been committed by Iranian infiltrators.

State Minister Stops in Amman En Route to Cairo

JN1305203491 Baghdad Iraqi Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2012 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf, state minister for foreign affairs, arrived in Amman today en route to Cairo to attend a ministerial Arab League meeting. During his brief stay in Amman, the minister will speak with Jordanian officials about Arab developments and bilateral ties.

Trade Ministry, Canada Sign Wheat Agreement

JN1305181191 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1731 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, 13 May (INA)—The Trade Ministry has signed an agreement with the Canadian Wheat Board to sell Iraq half a million tonnes of Canadian wheat.

The INA has learned that the agreement stipulates that the Canadian party will ship the wheat starting next month until the end of December this year.

AP Correspondent Released After 2-Day Detention

NC1405104991 Paris AFP in English 1043 GMT 14 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, May 14 (AFP)—A U.S. journalist and his Kuwaiti interpreter were released here Tuesday after being detained in Iraq since Sunday.

Mark Fritz, 35, of Associated Press wire service, and his interpreter Salah Zamani were freed and taken to the press centre set up for foreign journalists in the Information Ministry.

The two looked tired but in good health when they arrived in a civilian four-wheel-drive vehicle.

Police arrested Mr. Fritz and his interpreter inside the U.N.- controlled demilitarized zone along the Iraqi-Kuwaiti border, according to a U.N. spokesman.

They were travelling at the time from Kuwait City to the town of Safwan, near the northern border with Kuwait, the spokesman said.

After being taken to a prison in Safwan, they were moved to al-Basrah further north, the spokesman said.

Iraqi Airways Planes Begin Assembling in Amman

JN1205125991 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1145 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, 12 May (INA)—Iraqi Airways has begun assembling its fleet of planes in the Jordanian capital, Amman.

Nur al-Din Safi, director general of Iraqi Airways, said today that two Boeing 707 planes have actually arrived in Amman from the Mauritanian capital, Nouakchott, yesterday.

He also said that negotiations are under way to return four planes, including two Jumbo 747's and two Boeing 727's, from Tunis to Amman. He added that approval has been obtained from the countries whose air space will be used by the planes on their return journeys.

He explained that Iraqi Airways has the right to transport its planes from Tunis to Amman without violating the air blockade, in accordance with the Chicago agreement on air transportation, as these planes carry neither passengers nor cargo.

He also said that Iraqi Airways, in cooperation with the Foreign Ministry, is making persistent efforts to obtain the necessary agreement of the Security Council Sanctions Committee to exempt the Iraqi Airway planes from the air economic blockade so that they can resume their activity within the framework of the international civil aviation companies.

He added that the company's technical cadres in Amman last week began maintenance work on the planes that are being assembled, prior to operating the Iraqi air fleet that consists of 33 modern planes.

Two Floating Bridges Erected in Al-Muthanna

JN1305100691 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0830 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, 13 May (INA)—It was announced here today that work has been completed on two floating bridges at al-Fatmawah city [name as received] in place of the two bridges that were destroyed by the U.S. aggression against Iraq.

In the same city, cleaning and organizing operations continue through collective work campaigns. Tens of tonnes of rubble and waste have been removed, and major and side-streets have been paved.

In a statement to INA today, the al-Muthanna Governorate mayor said a number of areas have been illuminated, electricity networks serviced, new water pipelines laid to replace those destroyed by the aggressive bombing, and rain water drainage systems operated.

He noted that 70 percent of the operations to rebuild what was destroyed by the war have so far been accomplished.

Other Iraqi governorates are witnessing similar activities to rebuild what was destroyed by the aggressive war.

Electricity Restored to 'All' Governorates

JN1305122091 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1147 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, 13 May (INA)—The technical and engineering cadres today completed reconnecting electrical power to the Governorate of Dahuk in northern Iraq.

Engineering sources at the Ministry of Industry and Military Industrialization told INA that with this achievement, the technical organs have completed the task of providing all of Iraq's governorates with electrical power from the national grid.

After the aggression stopped, Iraq witnessed a large-scale campaign of reconstruction to repair electrical power networks which were damaged as a result of the aerial bombardment and criminal acts.

Kurdish Rebel Leader: Talks Progress 'Significant'

LD1305214591 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1748 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, May 13 (TANJUG)—The Iraqi-Kurdish talks on new Kurdish autonomy within a single federal Iraq resume [word indistinct] today.

Before the talks, now in their seventh day, began this morning, Mas'ud Barzani, leader of the Kurdish rebels, stated to TANJUG correspondent that significant progress had been made in the talk so far.

Barzani declined to disclose any details, but it is no doubt very indicative that the Baghdad press has carried photos of Barzani and leaders of other Kurdish parties, which simply could not have been possible earlier.

Iraq has welcomed the United Nations efforts aimed at successfully resolving the problem of hundreds of thousands of Kurdish refugees.

Deputy Iraqi Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz stated after conferring with ranking U.N. official for refugees Sadruddin Aga Khan yesterday that his country would actively cooperate in the elimination of obstacles standing in the way of a solution to the problem of Kurdish refugees, on condition the Kurdish issue was not used for any political ends.

Opposition on Al-'Amarah, Al-Basrah Actions

NC1305161891 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 1410 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] According to new information received from our revolutionaries on their recent operations in al-'Amarah and al- Basrah Governorates, many soldiers were killed or wounded in an attack on a command center for the 12th Division's 50th Brigade, while the others fled. A vehicle and a DSHK machine gun were also destoyed during the attack, and weapons and ammunition were seized.

The same area, which is near the Burhan bridge on the main road to Nahiyat al-Salam in al-'Amarah, was the scene of another attack on the remnants of the regime's forces there. Eleven mercenaries from the regime's forces, including an officer, were killed and 10 others were injured.

A third attack followed the next day during which a military vehicle was destroyed and all aboard were killed.

In al-'Amarah Governorate, our brave revolutionaries attacked a personnel carrier belonging to the 2d Regiment of the 95th Brigade. Members of this force, which was deployed west of al-Musharrah town between the river and the al-Musharrah-al-'Amarah road, put up only weak resistance. Our revolutionaries burned a number of camps there after seizing weapons.

In al-Basrah Governorate, one of our units attacked a [words indistinct], killing or wounding all soldiers manning this post.

Rebel Operations Said Continuing in Al-Basrah

JN1305162091 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1545 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] Damascus, 13 May (SANA)—Ayatollah Muhammad Taqiy al- Mudarrisi, an Iraqi opposition leader, has affirmed that stability cannot be achieved in Iraq and the region without dislodging the Iraqi regime. He said the head of this regime is the head of the problem.

In an interview with Canadian television, al-Mudarrisi urged the world's states to shoulder their responsibilities toward the tragedy of the Iraqi people.

In a statement issued today, the office of al-Mudarrisi reported that popular Iraqi forces continue their operations against the forces of the Iraqi regime in al-Basrah, al-Tannumah, al-Samawah, al-Hillah, al-Qurnah, and al-'Imarah.

Opposition Reports Al-Madinah, Safwan Operations

NC1305201291 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 1910 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] Continuing their strategy of undermining the regime's pillars and demolishing its props, our heroic revolutionaries have launched a major attack against the regime's institutions and departments in al-Madinah. According to a report we received, the revolutionaries captured 30 of the regime's senior henchmen, including 26 officers. These henchmen were put on trial, and some were justly executed.

The report adds that many of the regime's henchmen in nearby areas abandoned their posts and fled when they heard the news of this attack.

In al-Madinah's Talhah area, our revolutionaries staged a three-pronged attack on the regime's forces stationed at the al-Karamah bridge, the ruling party's office in the area, and a school. They inflicted severe losses on these forces, amounting to 80 killed or wounded.

To complement this attack, our revolutionaries launched another attack in the same area to liquidate the remnants of the regime's personnel there.

According to reports from Safwan, the forces sent by the regime to regain control of the city have not succeeded thus far in carrying out their mission, despite the fact that they perpetrated a number of crimes against unarmed civilians.

The reports say that in order to prevent a repetition of the extensive attack the masses carried out on 2 May, the regime's henchmen are clearly reluctant to launch a large-scale confrontation with the citizens. The reports assert that, according to the figures available to the regime's local officials, the masses have so far executed 120 security forces personnel, intelligence operatives, and senior party officials in the city.

It should be noted that on the Friday before last, our people, including residents of Safwan and arriving refugees, carried out a large-scale offensive against the regime's security and party centers. They captured a large number of the regime's henchmen and put them on trial, and those who had participated in recent assassinations of citizens were executed.

Radio Reports Attacks, Demonstration in Zakho

NC1405151091 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Opposition in Arabic 1300 GMT 14 May 91

[Text] Forces of the popular uprising have attacked munition and arms depots of the tyrant's forces in the southern city of al- Qusayr. The resulting exchange of fire led to casualties among the tyrant's forces.

The tyrant's forces also suffered casualties in the north when opposition forces attacked a government office building being used by the troops in al-Sulaymaniyah.

Some 500 refugees in Zakho attacked a police station yesterday. They threw stones at the station and beat a man they accused of working for the regime's intelligence service. The citizens began attacking the regime's offices and officials after holding a protest march against the tyrant Saddam Husayn. Angry crowds smashed the police station's windows and wrecked cars in the city streets. The citizens also attacked the local governor's office and smashed windows there, but they did not enter the police station or the governor's office. The demonstration followed a ceremony at which the U.S. forces transferred control of the town to a UN mission.

Opposition Radio: Nuclear Energy Chief Detained

NC1405152891 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Opposition in Arabic 1300 GMT 14 May 91

[Text] The authorities of the tyrant's regime have detained Dr. Humam 'Abd-al-Khaliq, chairman of Iraq's Nuclear Energy Committee [NEC], accusing him of negligence in connection with the leak abroad of information about the regime's nuclear program. According to well-informed sources, only the tyrant, Defense Minister Husayn Kamil al-Majid, who is related to the tyrant by marriage, and the NEC chairman know the full details of this secret program.

Arab League Urged To Normalize Inter-Arab Ties

JN1405103891 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0930 GMT 14 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, 14 May (INA)—The newspaper AL-THAWRAH calls for giving top priorty to the task of rectifying inter-Arab ties and for making this task a mainstay of inter-Arab action in its official and popular frameworks.

In an article published today, the paper stresses that efforts to achieve this objective should draw inspiration from well-known principles and firm traditions that safeguard

pan-Arab security, protect basic rights, and lead to an effective Arab solidarity that would help the Arabs achieve progress and pan-Arab renaissance on the one hand and face challenges and external threats on the other.

AL-THAWRAH, organ of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, says that the Arab League is responsible for initiating efforts to define the means, methods, and measures for reviving collective Arab action in its multifaceted political and economic forms.

AL-THAWRAH urges the Arab League to play a positive role in resolving inter-Arab differences, normalizing tense relations, and tackling the imbalance created by the new world order.

The paper enumerates the objectives which the Arab nation's interests dictate should be achieved. Foremost among these objectives are keeping the region away from the colonial sphere of influence and regional dangers, entrenching the foundations of a pan-Arab security order, achieving solidarity and cooperation among Arab states, and developing pan-Arab cooperation in all spheres, the paper says.

The paper urges the Arab League to play a key role in removing the injustice that has befallen Iraq as a result of the U.S. hegemony over world bodies in general and the UN Security Council in particular. It also calls upon the Arab League to work tirelessly to guarantee the restoration of the Palestinian people's inalienable rights.

AL-THAWRAH underscores the fact that all those concerned with Arab affairs, including those who were trapped into participation in the conspiracy against Iraq, its capabilities, and its noble pan- Arab course, have discovered that the U.S.-led alliance does not work in the Arabs' interests. The paper says: During the Gulf war, the United States promised to grant those parties security and stability and to resolve regional issues on the basis of UN and UN Security Council resolutions. The United States, however, reneged on its promises.

The paper comments on Iraq's position on these issues and says that Iraq puts higher pan-Arab interests above all considerations and seeks to revive Arab institutions, Arab solidarity, and inter- Arab ties in the hope that the Arab League will restore its role and that others will learn the lessons of the past phase and rid themselves of wagers on foreigners to defeat the march of Arab renaissance and liberation.

Paper Urges World To Confront Anti-Iraq Designs

JN1405085091 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0800 GMT 14 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, 14 May (INA)—The newspaper AL-THAWRAH urges the world community to condemn and denounce foreign military presence in northern Iraq and the accompanying insolent threats to maintain sanctions against the Iraqi people.

In an editorial published today, the paper says that the U.S.- Atlantic alliance insolently and dispassionately continues its hostile conduct and practices against our people and country. This alliance continues to implement the chapters of its conspiratorial scheme which aims to infringe on Iraq's sovereignty and hit the heart of its national unity, using flimsy and weak excuses, advancing false "humanitarian" covers which cannot conceal the evil purposes behind them, the paper adds.

The paper affirms that what the United States and its allies Britain and France, are doing in northern Iraq constitutes a serious precedent in international relations. The paper adds that the presence of foreign troops in northern Iraq epitomizes a suspect conspiratorial endeavor to obstruct the joint efforts being made by the Iraqi Government and the United Nations to offer Kurdish refugees relief aid and help them return to their cities and villages.

The paper notes that the Western countries, which profess a false eagerness to help refugees and provide them with "humanitarian assistance" are the only parties responsible for the creation of this crisis, for hampering efforts to resolve their problem, and for attempting to exploit their sufferings to debilitate Iraq and tarnish its reputation.

The paper asserts that the drastic solution to all the problems facing the Iraqi people at present, foremost among which is the problem of Kurdish refugees, lies in lifting the sanctions imposed on Iraq.

Concluding its editorial, the paper stresses that the hostile U.S. and European moves and practices embody umistakably clear disregard for the international law and encroach on Iraq's territorial integrity. Not only this, these acts and practices also infringe on the sovereignty and dignity of all world peoples and states. This is something the world community should reject and confront firmly and resolutely, the paper concludes.

Foreign Ministry Director on Peace Process

Views 'Pivotal' Syrian Role

TA1305063091 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0500 GMT 13 May 91

[Telephone interview with Foreign Ministry Director General Re'uven Merhav by Gay Zohar and Ya'el Dan—live]

[Excerpts] [Zohar] Good morning, Re'uven Merhav, the director general of the Foreign Ministry.

[Merhav] Good morning.

[Zohar] How should we view the pessimism emanating from Cairo? There have already been a few pessimistic days during this process.

[Merhav] I assume there will be many more visits to Syria and, if the Americans are determined to continue, they will wish to coordinate positions with the Soviets. They will probably make more visits, hold more talks, and make additional attempts. It is plain that unless al-Asad budges from his position, they will not be able to achieve much.

[Zohar] Do you mean that we should rule out in advance the possibility of a peace conference without Syria?

[Merhav] I do not think we should rule out anything. We ought to examine the situation and decide what is applicable, whether things suit our needs and whether they are efficient. Syria is obviously pivotal now, particularly in view of the status it has gained in the wake of the Gulf war and its part in the coalitions, and as a result of the recent Damascus declaration. I find it very difficult to imagine how the process can be promoted without Syria. It is possible that after extended discussions, Syria will decide against joining the process, but the outcome is up to the Syrians, first and foremost, and also to those who have repeatedly assured us that they want to bring the Syrians into the process and are capable of doing it.

[Dan] As things stand now, there are two refusing parties: Syria and Israel. Does the fact that the burden of naysaying is shared make the situation easier for us?

[Merhav] I would not make such a mathematical division, because there are not two refusing parties. Both the Americans and the Soviets have told us that they will bring the others in, but in the meantime, the GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council] states have issued a declaration speaking in terms of observers.

It should be noted at this point that we would have naturally preferred the declaration to have emanated from Saudi Arabia, which was one of the countries that decided to invade Greater Israel on 15 May 1948. It may be embarrassing, but the fact that they are to a certain extent hiding behind the not-very-thick apron of the small Gulf states shows that at this point, they have not decided to cross the bridge. [passage omitted]

[Zohar] Will Israel be able to contemplate a U.S. proposal to join a conference—if such an invitation is indeed extended—without obtaining an explicit agreement in advance on what will be said there?

[Merhav] There can be no explicit agreement on what will be said. There should be an explicit agreement regarding the framework, the participants, and the actions' limitations, rather than on what would be said. The idea of an opening conference is to create a framework for dynamics.

[Dan] As things look now, Mr. Merhav, will we go if we receive an invitation?

[Merhav] An invitation from whom? Who else is participating?

[Dan] From Bessmertnykh and Baker.

[Merhav] We have plenty of conferences with them.

[Zohar] A conference with the participation of the Syrians, a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, and Egypt that would at the beginning address only regional, rather than political, issues.

[Dan] And with the attendance of observers from the Gulf states and Saudi Arabia.

[Merhav] I think we would, after things are hashed out, of course.

[Dan] Including three UN observers?

[Merhav] There is as yet no talk of UN observers. Our stand on the UN observers has been reiterated: The United Nations has to do a lot of housecleaning with regard to us before we can talk with it. [passage omitted]

Insists on 'Open, Fair' Meeting

TA1305174491 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1400 GMT 13 May 91

[Interview with Foreign Ministry Director General Re'uven Merhav by Rafi Reshef—live]

[Excerpts] [Reshef] Good evening, Mr. Merhav.

[Merhav] Good evening.

[Reshef] Would you like to adopt one of those scenarios? [reference to earlier interview by Reshef with MA'ARIV foreign affairs editor]

[Merhav] No, I would not like to adopt any scenario. All that I know is that we are at the stage of convening the participants for the regional meeting. This convening process will be very complicated. The initial issue is, first of all, who is coming and under what conditions. If we do not all have clear and fundamental conditions under which to carry out this matter, it will be impossible to implement.

[Reshef] Let us assume, Mr. Merhav, that we cannot reach a compromise on the issue of whether the conference will be a one-time event or a continuous framework, or on whether a UN observer will participate—even with Israel exhibiting greater flexibility, or so it appears—regarding the role of the European countries. Suppose it is nevertheless decided to invite us to a conference. What do we do?

[Merhav] Look, I want to say something about the European countries. This is important, but not essential. The issues that are really essential are that the countries with which we are at conflict participate, and the basic conditions under which we participate. We know that Syria is interested in participating, and in the best tradition of their experienced president, Hafiz al-Asad, Damascus is spreading reports that it is interested, that it is becoming more moderate, that it recognizes Israel and wants peace. On the other hand, it is creating difficulties regarding its actual participation. We have also been receiving very strange messages from the Gulf states, such as an indirect message that the secretary general of the GCC [Gulf Coorperation Council], which is an organization incorporating six Gulf states, five of which are small, one of which is large and important—at least in a financial sense—will send its secretary general to be present....

[Reshef, interrupting] We have yet to get to that point. I just want to ask you something very simple. Assuming that the small procedural differences are not resolved point by point, and the Americans and the Soviets decide to issue an invitation, would we consider that a problem?

[Merhav] That would undoubtedly constitute a problem, and I do not believe that we would participate in a conference without prior agreement on its basic conditions. This is a matter of life and death for us, and not just exercise in international diplomacy. These issues pertain to our very existence, and we would be sorely mistaken to attend a conference just to say we went, and then predictably break it up.

[Reshef] Yes, but that would be an offer not easily refused.

[Merhav] Why would it be difficult to refuse?

[Reshef] An agreement, a consensus, with everything laid at our doorstep, especially considering Prime Minister's recent remarks about Greater Israel and so forth?

[Merhav] We have experience with regional and international conferences in which we were tried and sentenced in absentia. That is old hat. If our participation is desired, then the parameters must be decided with us in advance, in a fair, open, and honorable manner. [passage omitted]

[Reshef] Might we not make a small gesture, as we did regarding European participation, and also accept a role for the UN secretary general? The reports coming from Damascus and the other Arab capitals show that the Arabs insist on the participation of the United Nations. The question is whether that will pose an obstacle, because if we surmount that issue we may move a step closer to the conference.

[Merhav] I do not think that is currently a major issue. If it turns out to be the pivotal and only obstacle, I assume that the government will address the matter. I am not sure that considering our experience with the United Nations, and our collective memory.... [changes thought] When we reunite the families of the Ethiopian Jews, we remember that the United Nations ruled that Zionism is racism. I am not sure that they are the partner we want. I suggest, however, we first pass the numerous other obstacles in our path and address the issue of the participation of other parties at a later stage. [passage omitted]

Olmert on Syrian Role, UN Participation

TA1405062691 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0500 GMT 14 May 91

[Telephone interview with Health Minister Ehud Olmert by Gay Zohar and Ya'el Dan—live]

[Excerpt] [Dan] Good morning, Health Minister Olmert.

[Olmert] Good morning.

[Dan] We have not spoken for a long time; you were overseas.

[Olmert] Let us not exaggerate.

[Dan] Coming back from there, does peace now seem closer or would that also be an exaggeration?

[Olmert] I do not see any connection between my opinion on whether peace is near and the fact that I was a guest of the WHO in Switzerland. I do not see the connection. What concrete questions do you have?

[Dan] Okay, let us get down to brass tacks. Is it true that we are willing to hold a conference even without Syria?

[Olmert] I do not remember any decisions being made by an authorized body on the composition. First of all, we are not willing to accept a conference. We have said that we oppose a conference.

[Dan] We are talking about a regional conference.

[Olmert] A regional conference is a term used by political pundits. We accept a one-time convocation that will be followed by direct negotiations between Israel and the Arab states. I think that this wording is the most accurate description of what we agree to. Now, as to who will participate in these negotiations; of course, the more countries participating the better; however, if some of them prefer not to take part—well, that is less good, but I personally do not think that the whole process depends on everyone's participation. Of course, one must also examine this question from the point of view of the potential Arab participants. In other words, on the Arab side, some countries may say that they are unwilling to

participate in the absence of certain parties, and perhaps that is how things appear right now. I do not know.

[Zohar] In other words, as far as Israel is concerned there is no insistence on Syrian participation. Maybe it would be even better if they would stay home and thus permit us to hold an almost direct dialogue. A Jordanian delegation would then be sitting there; we already have an agreement with the Egyptians, the Americans and the Soviets as well—and there we have what we wanted: direct negotiations.

[Olmert] No, I think you are describing things wrongly.

[Zohar] Too optimistically?

[Olmert] No, it is not a question of optimism. Your description of what should take place simply contrasts with the way we see things. The one-time meeting of several countries does not constitute the negotiations. Whether Syria is there or not, when the negotiations eventually begin they will be direct talks between Israel and one Arab country. There may be several parallel negotiation processes going on, between Israel and Jordan, between Israel and Syria, or between Israel and Saudi Arabia. That is the aim of the proposed framework. The issue of Syria's participation or absence will not affect the direct nature of the negotiations.

[Dan] Can you find any logic or point to Shim'on Peres' and Yitzhaq Rabin's assertions that Israel would be better off without Syria because negotiations with Syria will force us to give back the Golan Heights and it is therefore better to leave Syria out at the first stage?

[Olmert] The way I see Shim'on Peres' position is that the opposite of what the government says is always the better alternative. If the government had said that it was opposed to the participation of Syria, Peres would have immediately explained why its participation was crucial to the process. Since Mr. Peres is under the impression that the government is fighting tooth and nail to get Syria into the talks, he is against it. Really, I do not want to get into an argument with Mr. Peres. The question is very simple: Is there a greater chance of achieving a modicum of stability in the Middle East while Syria is at a state of war with Israel? Because Syria clearly constitutes the more serious military threat, it is naturally logical to want any agreement to be binding on Syria as well. It is correct to ask whether we should abandon the entire process if Syria refuses to participate, but to come and say that it is not in our interest to reach an accord with Syria is not, in my opinion, a logical approach that takes into account all our future needs and all the possible developments.

[Zohar] One of the two issues of contention with Syria is the participation of a UN representative. The UN secretary general announced today that the United Nations has declared that Zionism is not racism, and subsequently demanded, just like al-Asad, that a representative of the international organization also take part in the regional conference.

[Olmert] One must be precise. To the best of my understanding, Syria has not said that it just wants a UN representative. Syria wants a UN conference; these are two different things. A UN representative with this or that status is one thing, and a UN conference is something completely different. What the Syrians actually want, as I see things, is a conference under a UN framework that is conducted according to the modus operandi of the United Nations, and invested with UN authority—with all that this means.

[Dan] Excuse me, Minister Olmert, but as far as we know Israel is even opposed to a symbolic UN representative that will not even have the right to speak. That was one of the compromises suggested.

[Olmert] That compromise is a proposal we tossed about among ourselves. It has no real significance because it comes nowhere near to anything acceptable to any other party. Therefore, there is no point in discussing it. Our position in principle is that we are opposed to UN participation, period. I think that the reasons are understandable and do not require any additional clarification. Thus, as long as the Syrians insist on a conference hosted by the United Nations, I do not see any basis whatsoever for a dialogue on this point. [passage omitted]

Jerusalem Jordanians Not Acceptable for Conference

TA1305182791 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] Israel will not agree to the participation of East Jerusalem residents with Jordanian citizenship in a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. Israel rejects, therefore, any possibility that figures like Faysal al-Husayni will participate in the negotiations, sources in the Prime Minister's Office told our political correspondent 'Imanu'el Halperin.

The prime minister intends to stress to James Baker, in their meeting Wednesday, Israel's correct stands, which remain opposed to a UN representative and an ongoing conference. Jerusalem does not, however, view the pessimistic reports from Damascus as the last word. They point out that an effort will be made to achieve positive results from the process initiated by the U.S. secretary of state. Defense Minister Moshe Arens, however, plans to propose to James Baker to return to the government's original peace initiative and to concentrate on finding an interim solution in the territories if it appears that Israel is to be called on to make additional concessions.

Jerusalem Insists Conference Viewed as 'One-Time'

TA1405045991 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0400 GMT 14 May 91

[Text] On the eve of another visit to Israel by U.S. Secretary of State Baker this afternoon, sources in Jerusalem this morning said that Israel continues to oppose the use of the term peace conference to describe the planned one-time meeting. Israel demands that this

meeting be called an opening event, without any follow-up, to launch direct negotiations between Israel, the Arab states, and the Palestinians.

Our political correspondent Arye Golan adds that the issues of UN participation in the conference and the Palestinian representation from East Jerusalem remain among the issues still under contention.

Baker will meet with a delegation of Palestinians this evening. Tomorrow morning he will meet Prime Minister Shamir and afterwards with Defense Minister Arens. Baker will meet with Foreign Minister Levi on 16 May after Levi returns from Europe.

Shamir Not Expected To Soften on 'Central Issues'

TA1405060591 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 14 May 91 pp 1, 2

[Report by political correspondent Hemi Shalev]

[Excerpts] Just before Secretary of State James Baker's arrival on another round of talks in Jerusalem, sources at the Prime Minister's Office pointed out last night that Yitzhaq Shamir is not about to soften his stands on any of the three central issues on the agenda: a continuing peace conference, the inclusion of the United Nations in the process, or the participation of Palestinians with any link whatsoever to East Jerusalem.

It is plain that Baker's intentions remain ensconced in deep fog, in the wake of what was described as an unsuccessful round of talks in Syria, and the sources stress that before Shamir voices his position, he will demand to know on what basis Baker is demanding "additional concessions" from Israel. It is also plain that the prime minister's entourage feels growing apprehension and suspicion toward Baker and his policy. [passage omitted]

It is believed in Jerusalem that, if Baker's efforts to organize a regional conference fail, Israel may appeal to the Palestinians on its own initiative and propose direct talks over an interim arangement in the territories. This plan has been supported—it was even before Baker launched his tours—by many Cabinet ministers, including Defense Minister Moshe Arens, Justice Minister Dan Meridor, and Deputy Foreign Minister Binyamin Netanyahu. These ministers further believe that such an initiative may allay some of the administration's expected anger toward Israel.

Jerusalem sources believe that the tone of Baker's remarks in Cairo, which implied that the current difficulties stem from the disparity between the Israeli and Syrian positions, indicate Baker's intention "to blame" Israel and Syria jointly for the failure of his efforts.

It should be noted, however, that Jerusalem has prepared various scenarios of the administration's actions in the event of a failure of Baker's current efforts. Some believe that the secretary will pursue the attempt to organize a "mini-conference" without Syria but with Jordan, the Palestinians, Egypt, and possibly the Gulf states. By the way, even if this scenario materializes, the dispute over the continuing nature of the conference, UN participation, and the inclusion of an East Jerusalem representative will remain valid.

Alternatively, Jerusalem does not rule out a scenario that has been the object of media speculations in recent weeks, according to which President Bush will invite the region's state leaders for a summit in Washington, in a last and dramatic attempt to resolve the differences of opinion.

Jerusalem, however, believes that Bush will not take this course if Baker recommends against it.

In any event, there is profound concern in Jerusalem over the fact that the failure of Baker's efforts will greatly jeopardize Israel's ability to raise U.S. guarantees for the absorption of immigrants, and there is growing fear that when the request for guarantees is submitted in September, the administration will announce that an affirmative response depends on a total discontinuation of settlement.

[Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew on 14 May, in a front-page report by 'Aqiva Eldar, 'Oded Zaray, and Yizhar Be'er, quotes "senior officials in Jerusalem" as saying "last night" that "the continuation of the peace process depends on President Hafiz al-Asad's consent to allow Jordan and the Palestinians to launch negotiations with Israel without Syrian participation in a regional conference." The sources estimated that "if it transpires that Syria is ready to guarantee not to interfere with the convening of a conference without its participation, Baker may act on his plan to invite the parties to a noncoercive conference in mid-June, with the attendance of a reporting observer on behalf of the UN secretary general."

[HA'ARETZ adds that "according to sources close to the prime minister, when Shamir meets with the secretary of state, he will tell him that he is ready to participate in an opening and a closing encounter even without Syria, and to hold talks with a united Arab delegation that would include a Palestinian representation, and even with either a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation or separate delegations from Jordan and of residents of the territories."]

Hungarian Prime Minister Antall Arrives

TA1305180091 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] Hungarian Prime Minister Jozsef Antall and his wife arrived in Israel this afternoon for an official visit. Our correspondent Dan Eshel reports that Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir received the visitors in a Rose Garden ceremony in Jerusalem. Tomorrow, Prime Minister Antall will visit the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial where he will receive the title of righteous gentile in the name of his late father, who helped to save Jews in his country during World War II. Antall dines with the prime minister tonight. During his visit, the Hungarian

leader will confer with the president and the finance minister, with whom he will discuss economic agreements between the two states.

Shamir, Antall Deliver Speeches

LD1305191191 Budapest Domestic Service in Hungarian 1600 GMT 13 May 91

[Report by Jerusalem correspondent Mihaly Erdei-Grunwald on Hungarian Prime Minister Jozsef Antall's visit to Israel]

[Text] I would quote a few ideas from the speeches given at the ceremonial reception in the Rose Garden. Yitzhaq Shamir welcomed the Hungarian prime minister and the Hungarian delegation with the following words: Jerusalem, for the Jewry, is not simply a city, it is not merely the capital. Jerusalem, for us, is a concept, a symbol, since the history of the Jewish people it has been the heart, the soul, of the Jewish people. We celebrated just yesterday the 24th anniversary of the unity of the town, the fulfillment of our hopes.

The prime minister gave special emphasis to the following words: In the (?history) of the relationship of our peoples, there were beautiful periods characterized by mutual understanding and peaceful coexistence, and there have been tragic phases too—the era of discrimination and persecution which culminated 50 years ago, at the time of the Holocaust. The prime minister's visit opens a new page in the history of the relationship of the two peoples and the two countries. Under your leadership, democratic Hungary is advancing on the road of freedom, democracy, and respect for human rights. We all frankly hope that your visit to Israel, our talks, will further strengthen the mutual understanding between our peoples and widen our relations, as well as form a friendly relationship between the two peoples.

In his reply, Prime Minister Jozsef Antall also singled out the special symbolism of Jerusalem for mankind and added that, in the neighborhood of the memorial to the martyrs, we remember with deep emotion the millions of victims and the hundreds of thousands who were dragged away from Hungary to the death camps during the Hitlerite occupation. It is the special tragedy of history that fear paralyzes and that quite often it has paralyzed even the decent ones just as the other dictatorships have. Dictatorships are similar to each other because they ignore human rights.

He continued in the following way: It is from here, from Jerusalem, that I would like to make clear on behalf of the Hungarian Government, in the name of the Hungarian people, that free and democratic Hungary, in acknowledging its responsibility, will do everything so that the Jews living along the Danube and Tisza Rivers should feel at home, should live in peace and security and deserving respect, should be able to foster their traditions freely, should be able to practice their religion and to nurture their natural contacts with Israel, or that they should be able to emigrate if they so wish.

Antall Stresses Hungary's 'Obligation'

LD1305195491 Budapest Domestic Service in Hungarian 1900 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] The Hungarian Government, beyond the legal frameworks, wishes to create the social and material conditions for the assertion of the minorities' endeavors. This is what Jozsef Antall stated in Jerusalem, at the banquet which was held by Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir in honor of the Hungarian Government delegation. Jozsef Antall emphasized that the government felt that it was its obligation to care for the 80,000-strong Jewish community in Hungary, so that they should feel, themselves, at home and be able freely to practise their religion in Hungary. Nor will obstacles be raised in front of those who intend to emigrate, but all freedoms and protection of rights will also be given to one who wants to be a Jew in Hungary, the premier said.

Praises Shamir on Gulf War Restraint

LD1405030291 Budapest MTI in English 1935 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] Jerusalem, May 13 (MTI)—In his toast given at the banquet in honour of Hungarian Prime Minister Jozsef Antall in Jerusalem on Monday, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir, speaking about the history of Jewish-Hungarian relations said there have been Jews in the Carpathian Basin since the 11th century, and that they have taken an active part in Hungary's economy, trade, culture and science, though their rights have not always been respected.

Shamir recalled that more than half of the Hungarian Jewish population had died in Nazi death camps fifty years ago. There were, however, people in that dark period as well, who extended a helping hand to the Jews sentenced to death. To that group of people belonged the father of the present Prime Minister of Hungary Jozsef Antall, Shamir said.

The largest Jewish community in Central Europe today is in Hungary, whose members are free and active participants of the country's public life. "We appreciate the Hungarian Government's firm measures against anti-Semitic manifestations", Shamir said.

Israel will do everything it can to help Hungary in its endeavours to liberalize social and economic life and create a basis for free enterprise, Shamir said, expressing his hope that his meeting with Antall will help develop the two countries' ties, establish friendship between Hungary and Israel and strengthen mutual understanding.

In his answer, Jozsef Antall spoke about the changes in Hungary, which has chosen the path of parliamentary democracy.

Speaking about the significance of 'moral rebirth', he said that a cornerstone of that was tolerance towards national, ethnic and religious minorities. Beyond legal guarantees, he said, the Hungarian Government now

wants to create the social and material conditions for minorities to be able to realize their goals, preserve their traditions and their culture and practice their religion.

There is a Jewish community numbering nearly 80,000 living in Hungary, Antall said, the largest one between France and the Soviet Union. Hungary is the only place east of Paris that has a rabbinical school.

The Hungarian Government considers it an obligation to make the Jewish community feel at home in Hungary. At the same time, it regards that community's ties with Israel to be natural and an important factor of international and bilateral relations.

Hungary will be consistent in rejecting racial discrimination and will use the full force of the law against all forms of it, Antall said.

The tragedy of the Holocaust has poisoned and, perhaps, is poisoning the atmosphere but this has to be brought to an end, he stressed. The Hungarian Government is responsible for the Jewish community living in Hungary and will defend it.

The Hungarian Government will never block the way for Jews wishing to emigrate. At the same time, it will guarantee all freedoms and legal conditions for those wanting to be Jews in Hungary, Antall stated.

The Hungarian ruling parties and other parliamentary parties consider themselves to be successors to those parties and ideas that opposed Nazism during World War II, and, should they be followers of national, European and Christian thoughts and other ideas, they reject everything that is inhuman and reminds of Nazism.

Beyond results achieved so far, there are still unexplored possibilities to increase trade and economic co-operation, to hold regular exchanges of political views and to develop scientific and cultural exchanges, Antall said.

Speaking about international issues, he praised the sober and balanced policy Israel had pursued during the Gulf War. He expressed his hope that the Middle East conflict can be resolved through further efforts, compromises and mutual respect of interests.

[Budapest Domestic Service in Hungarian at 2000 GMT on 13 May carries the following recording of Antall's final remarks during his toast: "Hungarian public opinion has been and is following with anxiety the often tragic developments of the Middle East region, thus also the events of the Gulf conflict. In tones of recognition, we can speak about the restrained, balanced, and sober policy which Israel evinced during the past war. The international efforts of the recent past suggest promising possibilities for promoting the settlement of the Middle East conflict that has lasted for many decades. We sincerely trust that through further common efforts, compromises, and the recognition of just interests, a possibility will open for the conflict's just, long-term, and reassuring resolution. We hope that also in the long-suffering region, in the tormented biblical lands, peace will reign at last."]

Supports Direct Negotiations, Signs Accords

TA1405113891 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1100 GMT 14 May 91

[Text] Sources at the Prime Minister's Office said that Hungarian Prime Minister Jozsef Antall agrees with Israel's position on direct negotiations between the countries of the region. He expressed the opinion that direct negotiations between all these countries could lead to better results. This was reported by Avi Pazner, Prime Minister Shamir's media adviser.

The leaders of the two governments signed three cooperation agreements between the two countries. Our correspondent Dan Eshel reports that one agreement prevents dual taxation, another encourages investment, while the third is on scientific and technological cooperation.

Earlier today, Jozsef Antall visited the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial and received the title of righteous gentile on behalf of his father. Antall's father rescued hundreds of Jews from death during World War II. Antall recounted the tragedy suffered by the Jewish people during World War II, and warned against the improper use of what he called the fire of anti-Semitism.

French Defense Minister Speaks on Peace Efforts

JN1305090191 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 13 May 91 pp 1, 22

[By Caroline Faraj]

[Text] Amman—French Defense Minister Pierre Joxe has said that we are now experiencing a period of vagueness and confusion. For more than a century, we have been awaiting the opportunity to improve and resolve the situation in the region. It seems that there is now an opportunity to bring about real and necessary improvement.

At a press conference he held last evening at the Jordan Intercontinental Hotel, Joxe stressed that France is determined to extend full support for the diplomatic efforts, and this is unquestionable, as he put it.

He added: As it has been said, there is "a window of opportunity" but the future will show whether it is narrow or wide and whether it is possible to exploit it!

He said: France acts in accordance with the great principles it has long worked for in the region and in the various regions, which are constant, clear, and based on general and international law. Therefore, there will not be surprises on the French side in this respect.

He noted that there are numerous efforts under way on the diplomatic level to establish just and comprehensive peace in the region, in addition to the successive and simultaneous presence of the foreign ministers of the superpowers!

He said: France, as well as Jordan, extends all possible support and backing to the efforts being made, which are enhanced by France's old, distinguished relations with the Arab countries in the region and with Israel.

France's role, however, despite being advanced and influential on the international level, is not the role of either of the two superpowers in the world. On the institutional level, France is a permanent member of the Security Council and has worked for years to reach a joint political expression by the EC.

He added: Due to all these various aspects, France can in fact play a useful role on the diplomatic and political levels. Despite that, however, the results are not certain because we are experiencing a period of vagueness and confusion!

On whether France would pressure Israel to change its position on the peace initiatives and the Palestine question, the French defense minister answered: I am not here to pressure Israel, but rather to examine the situation in Jordan and become familiar with this country.

With regard to Shamir's recent statement that he refuses to relinquish a single inch of the Arab occupied territories, Jerusalem, or the Gaza Strip, Joxe said: I looked over this statement in Jordan, and on 13 May, when I return home, I will learn of the French Government's response and whether or not it will comment on it!

He added: As you know, France's position on the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestine question is not new. His Excellency President Mitterand declared it in the Israeli Knesset. Hence, we reaffirm the continuation of this policy.

The French defense minister said that France values the efforts Jordan and other Arab countries are making to attain a just and lasting solution that will safeguard the interests of all parties.

On the nature of the duties that the French forces are tasked to carry out at the present time and whether they will participate in what they call the new security system, the French defense minister said: The French forces started to return to France some time ago and the number of those remaining is minimal.

Joxe said: We do not claim to be carrying out a role other than the one the countries in any region asked us to undertake, considering that these countries are sovereign countries, or a role that they asked the international community to play in accordance with an action they had adopted, or to implement UN resolutions.

He added: If in the future France is asked to carry out a role in the region, it must first study the possibilities and meticulously anaylze the circumstances on whose basis it will send forces.

Joxe affirmed that such an action will be based on not harming the sovereignty of countries and on trying to impose respect for international law. Sometimes, such actions take the form of humanitarian assistance because the French forces are trained, and have the hardware and transport and communications means to offer tangible technical assistance such as medical services to the "displaced." He said that there is an urgent need for a mobile hospital in Turkey to help those whom he called "displaced", that is the Iraqi Kurds.

On the French military presence in the Gulf Joxe said: The French units that the United Arab Emirates had requested withdrew a few days ago. There remain only three vessels, which are operating within the field of removing mines, in cooperation with other vessels from the Western European Union and the United States.

With respect to Kuwait, the French defense minister said that a small group remained whose task is to remove land mines, and this group will return to France very soon. He added: However, the Kuwaiti Government has asked us to dispatch a smaller group of French experts in the field of removing mines to train some Kuwaiti experts. This means that the first group will return to France unless there are security reasons that affect civilians, which will justify some of the members of this group staying behind as specialists and trainers to perform this task.

Joxe said: With respect to Saudi Arabia, we had 15,000 male and female soldiers, who all returned, with the

exception of 1,000 soldiers who are expected to return home within the next few weeks.

The French defense minister said that three aspects govern the French military presence in the region. The first aspect deals with military cooperation with several countries such as Jordan, the United Arab Emirates, and Qatar. These are countries with which we are bound by old relations and in which we have military experts working.

He said: These relations are not linked to a transient crisis, but are based on mutual trust, as is the case with regard to Jordan.

The second aspect of French military presence, such as the French Navy's presence in the region and other regions, is limited to ships roaming the seas and anchoring at various ports. This is an ancient and permanent French tradition that is not linked to a temporary crisis.

The final aspect of this presence is a passing phenomenon related to the crisis, which is the case of the French military elements on the Kuwait-Iraqi and the Iraqi-Turkish borders. These operations, despite being linked to the crisis, are not military operations but are related to security and humanitarian assistance.

He added: With regard to the soldiers on the Iraqi-Kuwaiti borders, these do not exceed 20-30 soldiers within a multinational force under UN auspices assigned the task of restoring tranquility. This situation will not last long and cannot be called a military presence, but rather a presence of soldiers as is the case in the Sinai Desert.

Their presence on the Iraqi-Turkish borders comes within the presence of U.S. and European forces and aims at extending humanitarian aid. Bear in mind that we have several hundred French soldiers there, including specialists in medical services and other humanitarian services.

With regard to the frozen agreement between Jordan and France to buy fighter Mirage 2000 aircraft, he said: The Jordanian Government has requested that discussions be resumed on this issue. Discussions are still under way and the issue is being studied.

He pointed out that his country agreed to provide Jordan with spare parts for the French Mirage aircraft which Jordan had bought earlier.

Joxe praised the distinguished relations between France and Jordan in the various fields including military and armament, in addition to the good personal relations between His Majesty King Husayn and His Excellency President Francois Mitterand.

The guest minister will leave Jordan today for his country following an official two-day visit during which he met with His Majesty King Husayn and conveyed to him France's appreciation for Jordan's efforts toward establishing a just and lasting settlement of the Palestine question, while noting that the kingdom can play a big and important role in this regard.

He stressed that France, like Jordan, believes that the window that is currently open must be exploited to reach solutions to the regional problems based on respect and international legitimacy. Hence, the two countries wish success for the current diplomatic efforts being made in the region with the help of all parties.

Joxe also met with His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hasan, the prime minister, the foreign minister, and Staff General Fathi Abu-Talib, chief of the general staff.

Concludes Amman Visit 13 May

JN1305181591 Amman PETRA-JNA in Arabic 1555 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] Amman, 13 May (PETRA)—French Defense Minister Pierre Joxe left Amman this morning following a visit of several days to Jordan, during which he met with His Majesty King Husayn, the supreme commander of the Armed Forces; and senior officials.

He was seen off at the airport by Staff General Fathi Abu-Talib, chief of the General Staff, his aides, the commander of the Royal Air Force, and the French ambassador and military attache in Amman.

Official Cited on Peace Conference Stand

JN1405080191 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 14 May 91 pp 1,5

[By JORDAN TIMES Staff Reporter Nirmin Murad]

[Text] Amman—U.S. Secretary of State James Baker arrives in Amman today to brief Jordanian leaders on the outcome of his talks with Syrian, Egyptian and Soviet officials in Damascus and Cairo and to lay out his analysis of where his peace efforts currently stand.

In return, he will be presented with a reaffirmation of the Jordanian position that the Kingdom, while maintaining flexibility over the American approach, will not abandon its demands for a comprehensive peace based on the implementation of U.N. resolutions 242 and 338, which call for the exchange of territories for peace and according the Palestinians their national political rights.

Although Jordan has maintained its positive attitude to the bag of ideas carried by Mr. Baker to the region it has also been very clear in its position that the U.S.-led efforts should deal with the substanace of the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestinian problem rather than the form and modalities of how this objective can be achieved.

The Jordanian position, which is not fundamentally different from the views that Mr. Baker heard from Syrian leaders in Damascus on Sunday, "is not new," a senior official said. "Mr. Baker is fully aware of where we stand," said the official, speaking on condition of anonymity.

In the face of the Jordanian and Syrian position—which in essence seek to ensure that Israel returns occupied Arab territories in exchange for peace—and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir's repeated vows on Sunday not to return any Arab land, Mr. Baker's mission could only be furthered if there is any shift in the Israeli stand.

Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri, in an interview with Jordan Radio, said Monday that peace in the Middle East now depends on Israel and the U.S.'s ability to elicit "new thoughts" from the Israeli leadership and that the Arab World has already expressed its flexibility and its readiness for peace.

Further consolidating the Arab position in the equation is an expected Jordanian refusal to attend any Middle East peace parley without Syrian participation.

According to statements issued by Mr. Baker and remarks attributed to American officials, the two main sticking points are Syria's insistence on an effective U.N. role in a peace conference and the frequency of sessions of the parley.

The Syrian insistence on U.N. role as an observer—even less than that of the proposed European Community role—is diagonally opposite to the Israeli rejection of any role for the world body which it sees as hostile to Israel.

Jordanian officials say they will not be speaking on Syria's behalf and that the similar positions of Amman and Damascus are reflective of both countries' insistence on guarantees from the U.S. that the peace conference would be effective in reaching a solution to the Middle East problem.

To Jordan, the international legitimacy umbrella it requires would be fulfilled when the purpose of the proposed conference is explicitly announced to be the implementation of U.N. resolutions 242 and 338—the land for peace formula.

"The legal basis for the conference is resolutions 242 and 338 so the legitimacy of the conference is covered," one official explained.

Jordan is expected to remain steadfast on the issue of the how often the conference would be held or whether it would be a one time affair after which bilateral talks between Arab states and Israel begin.

One official said Jordan "will not accept a situation where Israel has a veto on the conference."

The Syrian position, Jordanian officials say, could become more flexible if the U.S. and Israel were able to accept the concept of a peace conference which would be held periodically. "In that case Syria would be willing to move forward with the Americans," said an official.

Already Jordan sees that a compromise was struck between Israel and the Arabs in that the proposed conference "is not a regional conference as Israel wanted nor an international conference as we have been saying."

Foreign Minister al-Masri, in his interview with Jordan Radio, said: "It is not clear yet what James Baker has achieved, but the matter now depends on Israel and its response to the American efforts."

Jordan and other Arab countries, he said, "have announced their readiness to be flexible to a certain degree, and this degree should not exceed the terms which the Arabs have accepted and not exceed... the principle of land for peace."

"Mr. Baker has to obtain new ideas from Israel that can facilitate the peace process," Mr. al-Masri said.

Jordanian officials have been cautious in their comments on Mr. Bakers's efforts terming them as "serious" but adding that optimism has to be reserved until Mr. Baker announces the results of his efforts.

However, the announcement by Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states expressing their readiness to send an observer to the proposed peace conference has been positively received in the Kingdom, which has maintained that those states, although not confrontation states with Israel, should be present at such crucial discussions.

Talas, Al-Murr View Syrian-Lebanese Unity

PM1005151991 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 9 May 91 p 2

[Unattributed report: "Talas: We Hope for Unity With Lebanon; We Have Been Struggling for This Since the Fifties"]

[Text] Beirut, AL-HAYAH—Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Engineer Michel al-Murr has emphasized "the importance of Syrian aid for the deployment of the Army," a very important matter as far as its military standing is concerned. He drew attention to "the continuation of that aid, which could take the form of military gifts and other things we currently need, in addition to the assistance we might get from the Syrian leadership."

General Mustafa Talas, Syrian deputy prime minister and defense minister, said "there will be no illegal arms on Lebanese territory." He stressed that "the Lebanese people now hate all the militias. That is why no militia is refusing to hand over all its arms. All the arms will be handed over and there will be no special treatment for anyone." He added that he wished unity with Lebanon could be achieved "in the framework of one Arab nation." He said he wished that could be achieved "soon or at least in the lifetime of our generation, for we have been struggling for the fulfillment of that wish since the fifties."

The statements of Ministers al-Murr and Talas were made after a luncheon given by the Syrian defense minister in honor of his Lebanese guest in the presence of senior Syrian officers and the Lebanese delegation. Al-Murr (who returned to Beirut on the afternoon of 7 May) said: "To sum up the visit I say that it reflected support for Lebanon, for its salvation and an end to its plight and war. Syria has done everything in its power to help Lebanon overcome its affliction. I say it has done everything because it has sacrificed blood, the most precious human sacrifice. It has denied us nothing. The president was clear on this matter. The aid will continue. Lebanon has had enough wars. We found the defense minister and the chief of staff fully supportive of Lebanese legitimacy and of the establishment of Lebanese legitimate authority in all Lebanese territory."

He said the Syrian aid could take the form of military gifts and other things we need today, such as officers to continue with the the training courses, in addition to whatever other aid the Syrian leadership may give us.

He pointed out that "if relations between two peoples and two countries like Lebanon and Syria do not assume a special status, it would be a great loss for Lebanon. I am a member of the committee in charge of this matter. We have naturally made progress in translating these special relations into clear bilateral agreements that would not be affected by the whims of politicians because the whims of Lebanese politicians sometimes expose Lebanon's supreme interests to dangers we can do without. We have made much progress. I believe that the special relations, with their political, security, and military aspect on the one hand and their economic aspect on the other, are in the interest of Lebanon and the Lebanese. Whenever we need aid we promptly say: Syria, where are you?—and that happens in every field. So why not manifest that in clear agreements, for we are two countries that complement one another."

Answering a question on the meetings, Minister Talas said: "Today's visit falls within the context of completing the consolidation of ties between the two armies in their capacity as the armies of two neighboring countries with deep-rooted historic ties. We are proceeding along that road. I consider this to be one of the most important visits. He himself (al-Murr) felt President Hafiz al-Asad's personal love for Lebanon and all the Lebanese officials and all sectors of the Lebanese people. We believe that Lebanon and Syria are one country. As you can see today, in Europe, 12 countries of different nationalities are aiming for a unified Europe in 1992. They will have one blue flag with 12 stars. So it behooves Syria and Lebanon, where the families are the same and the customs, traditions, and ethics are the same, to be united within the framework of one Arab nation. They are the closest to one another. We hope that would be achieved soon or at least in the lifetime of our generation so we may with our own eyes see the fulfillment of that wish we have been struggling to fulfill since the 1950's."

He was asked: The Lebanese Army has implemented the first phase of its deployment. There is another phase which is facing some difficulties with the non-Lebanese militias. What is Syria's role in that respect?

He replied: "Actually, our position on the militias is the same. I say to all the leaders of the militias: The Lebanese people do not like you. They are my friends and they know that. The truth is that the Lebanese people have come to hate all the militias. That is why there is no militia which opposes the solution. His Excellency Minister al-Murr and the Lebanese chief of staff are taking care of that. There are no obstacles. There will be no continuation of militias in Lebanon. All militias will hand over their arms and will be dissolved. There is no choice in this matter."

He was asked: Will that apply to the Palestinians, Iranians, and other foreigners?

He replied: "There will be no illegal arms on Lebanese territory. Legitimate arms will only be found in the hands of the Lebanese Army and the Internal Security Forces. There will be no special treatment for anyone. The al-Ta'if agreement will be implemented in letter and spirit."

He was asked: But some Palestinian organizations have declared, from Damascus, that they refuse to hand over their weapons.

He replied: "I believe that there is no problem whatsoever. On the contrary, those in Damascus did not object. They are more positive than others."

Meanwhile, President Hafiz al-Asad received a high-ranking Armenian delegation the evening before last. The delegation included Patriarch Peter the XVIIIth Casparian and a group of Armenian patriarchs and bishops in addition to [Lebanese] Justice Minister Khatchig Babikian and Deputy Malkun Ablaghian. He reviewed with them all aspects of Lebanese developments.

'Global' International Deal Could Free Hostages

PM1305105391 London SAWT AL-KUWAYT AL-DUWALI in Arabic 9 May 91 pp 1, 4

[Unattributed report: "Multipartite Deal Begins With Release of Western Hostages in Lebanon"]

[Excerpts] Tehran, SAWT AL-KUWAYT—Informed Iranian sources have revealed that the Western hostages in Lebanon will be released imminently within the framework of a global deal in whose preparation U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher—representing the EC—in addition to Iran, Syria, and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia are taking part.

The sources say that the release of the Western hostages—starting with the Germans—will coincide with the release of Lebanese prisoners in Germany and Israel in preparation for an Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon to be followed by the deployment of international emergency forces in the South and the Lebanese Army's reassumption of its tasks and the extension of the Lebanese state's authority. [passage omitted]

The sources point out that the series of extensive contacts made over the past few weeks between Iran, Syria, and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on the one hand and the United States, the EC states, and Israel on the other have resulted in agreement on the following arrangements:

1. Facilitation of the implementation of the Lebanese al-Ta'if agreement by internal and external parties to the Lebanese problem, that is including the Lebanese Army's deployment in all Lebanese areas and the disbandment of all the armed militias;
2. Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 425;
3. The Lebanese State's recognition of Hizballah, which is close to Iran, as a political force in the country to be represented in the new Lebanese political system;
4. Release of all Western hostages in Lebanon;
5. Release of all Lebanese prisoners and some Palestinians in Israel as well as Israeli prisoners in Lebanon;
6. The lifting of the restrictions imposed by the United States on the movement of Iranian funds since 1979;
7. Inclusion of Iran in the new security arrangements for the Gulf region;
8. U.S. commencement of serious action to start resolving the Middle East problem.

The sources mentioned point out that, in his address to Tehran University students a few days ago, Iranian President Hashemi-Rafsanjani hinted at the possibility of releasing the Western hostages imminently. [passage omitted]

SLA Radio on Possible Israeli Withdrawal

NC1105065191 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0445 GMT 11 May 91

[Text] The Voice of the South radio, mouthpiece of the South Lebanese Army [SLA], has said that Israel is ready to pull out of the border strip and implement Resolution 425 if the status of the SLA is settled as a part of an acceptable security or political agreement with the Lebanese Government. The radio says that Minister Michel al-Murr's remarks about army deployment in Jazzin may be premature.

Foreign Minister Buwayz Leaves for Cairo

NC1305111991 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1030 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] Minister of Foreign and Expatriates Affairs Lawyer Faris Buwayz left Beirut for Cairo today. The delegation accompanying him includes Major General Nabih Farhat, head of the state's security department. The visit is in response to an invitation from Minister Buwayz' Egyptian counterpart 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid.

While in Cairo, Buwayz will participate in the Arab League Ministerial Council meeting and will meet a Palestinian delegation led by Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department. They will discuss the extension of state authority over all Lebanese territory and the implementation of Resolution 425.

Buwayz asserted at Beirut International Airport that he will demand at the Arab League Ministerial Council meeting that the Arab tripartite committee's obligations toward Lebanon be fulfilled.

About his meeting with Qaddumi, he said that the dialogue with Palestinians is a key point in establishing the state's authority.

Karami Emphasizes Implementing UN 425

JN1205140091 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] Beirut—Lebanese Prime Minister 'Umar Karami has emphasized that implementation of Resolution 425 is the country's top priority and the key to resolving the Lebanese crisis. Quoted by the Voice of the People radio citing a press report, Karami said we are convinced that organizing Lebanese-Syrian relations is vital to tranquility, security, and stability throughout the country.

Meanwhile, Lebanese Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz begins a several-day visit to Egypt today. He will deliver a letter from President Ilyas al-Hirawi to President

Husni Mubarak, talk to Egyptian officials about concerns of shared interest, and sign cooperation agreements. During his Cairo visit, Minister Buwayz will also attend foreign minister-level Arab League Council meetings, set for next Wednesday. He will brief his Arab counterparts on progress toward the country's rehabilitation, security, and reassertion of state authority and enforcement of the national accord charter. Mr. Buwayz called the coming phase in Lebanon the phase of national unity, and taking the final step from a state of war to a state of peace. He stressed Lebanon's need for outside support to help it move forward.

Meanwhile, Lebanese Foreign Ministry sources have hinted at the strong possibility of a meeting in Cairo between Mr. Buwayz and U.S. Secretary of State James Baker.

Karami: State Alone Cannot Assimilate Militias

NC1205124691 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1130 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] Prime Minister 'Umar Karami has called for abandoning the mentality of fear of special relations with Syria. Rather, we should be open-minded about it. He also warned against obstructing such relations because that will harm Lebanon more than it will harm Syria.

In an interview with the Voice of the People radio station, Karami said the state cannot shoulder the burden of assimilating militia members by itself. He said the private sector must participate in this process.

Foreign Minister To Visit Tehran 'Soon'

LD1005145991 Tehran IRNA in English 1306 GMT 10 May 91

[Text] Beirut, May 10, IRNA—Lebanese Foreign minister Faris Buwayz is to pay an official visit to Tehran soon, it was announced in a meeting of Iranian Charge d'Affaires here Mohammad Javad Zamaniyan and Buwayz Friday.

Among other topics discussed in the meeting were the latest developments in the region and ways of strengthening Tehran-Beirut relations.

Zamanian told IRNA after the meeting that the Islamic Republic has always been ready to help secure release of the hostages held in Lebanon and that Tehran would spare no efforts to solve the issue.

Palestinians Open Fire at Army Patrol in South

NC1205180891 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1615 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] A Lebanese Army force deployed in the Tyre area today is preparing to deploy in the al-Zahrani area later on. During the deployment operation, Palestinians opened fire at a Lebanese Army patrol. The patrol responded by firing one shell. There were no casualties, and the incident was contained.

Palestinian sources told AFP that the incident was of a personal nature and was not important.

Fatah Official Escapes Assassination Attempt

NC1405061091 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0515 GMT 14 May 91

[Text] According to security information from the South, the Palestinian camp of 'Ayn al-Hilwah was the scene of intensive gunfire last night when an attempt was made to assassinate Muahmmad al-Fahd, member of the Fatah Central Committee. The information says that al-Fahd escaped unscathed but some of his bodyguards were injured. A force from the armed struggle dispatched patrols inside the camp to hunt down the culprits.

Two People Wounded in Sidon Explosion 12 May

NC1305062591 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0545 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] There were two explosions in Sidon city last night. The first was on Sidon's eastern boulevard. The second, which occurred 10 minutes later, targeted a recently refurbished Roman Catholic church in the al-Qanayih area. Two people were wounded in the second blast.

SLA Clashes Reported in South 10 May

NC1005164791 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1530 GMT 10 May 91

[Text] Clashes between the militias of agent Antoine Lahd and the Martyr Ma'ruf Sa'd forces took place on the Kafr Falus-Lib'a-'Ayn al-Mir Front at noon today. The sound of explosions reverberated in Sidon.

Lahd Militia Issues 'Final Ultimatum'

NC1305122591 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1130 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] Intermittent clashes are taking place on the Kafr Falus-Lib'a-'Ayn al-Mir combat lines between the positions of the Popular Liberation Army—Martyr Ma'ruf Sa'd forces and the agent Lahd militia positions. Machine guns and rockets are involved in these clashes. They follow intense clashes last night during which shells fell on residential areas east of Sidon.

The tension comes amid Israel's intransigence and refusal to discuss the implementation of Resolution 425. 'Aqil Hashim, commander of the so-called western zone in the Lahd militia, has threatened that the punishment will be severe if the military operations against this militia continue. In a statement addressed to Lebanese officials and leaders, he said: This is the final ultimatum. If you ignore it, we will be forced to deal with the matter in a different way.

Baker Concludes Talks, Departs 12 May

JN1205152691 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1517 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] President Hafiz al-Asad received at 1100 today U.S. Secretary of State James baker. The meeting was attended by Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam, Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', and U.S. Ambassador in Damascus Edward Djerejian.

The meeting concluded at 1645 today.

Mr. Baker left Damascus at 1745 today following a two-day visit to the Syrian Arab Republic. He was seen off at Damascus international airport by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', the chief of Foreign Ministry protocol, and the U.S. ambassador in Damascus.

Statements on Syrian-Israeli Differences

JN1405062691 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0415 GMT 14 May 91

[Excerpt] Cairo—U.S. Secretary of State James Baker has affirmed that there are essential differences between the Syrian and Israeli stands as regards the UN role, and the functions of and steps needed to hold a peace conference.

In a joint news conference with Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh in Cairo yesterday, news agencies have reported Mr. Baker as saying that Syria is a very important country to render the peace conference in the Middle East a success. He pointed out that the Soviet Union and the United States affirm that Syria's participation in the conference is inevitable because Syria is a very important country with regard to this question.

He expressed hope that efforts will continue to overcome obstacles so that the conference will be effective. He said we are attempting to overcome differences with the participation of the Soviet foreign minister. [passage omitted]

Soviet Minister Bessmertnykh Arrives

JN1405113891 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1115 GMT 14 May 91

[Text] Damascus—Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh and his delegation arrived in Damascus at noon today. They were received at Damascus International Airport by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'; the heads of the Eastern Europe, Protocol, and Information Departments at the Foreign Ministry; and the Soviet ambassador in Damascus and the Embassy staff.

In a statement to reporters, Bessmertnykh said: I consider it necessary to visit Damascus again after meeting with the region's leaders to exchange views on the results of the talks that have been held. Bessmertnykh asserted that Syria has a key role in the Arab-Israeli struggle. He said: We attach great importance to exchanging views with the Syrian leadership. I think that it is useful to exchange views again on the results of my tour in the region.

Answering a question on the difficulties facing the peaceful solution, Bessmertnykh said: It is possible to say that hope is growing. All states are working to take steps to hold the peace conference. There are some problems that need solutions. We are continuing our work.

Answering another question on his talks in Saudi Arabia and Egypt, Bessmertnykh said: Our talks were not confined to Saudi And Egyptian officials but also included the Israelis and the Jordanians. These talks revolved on the issue of launching the peace process in the region, on the practical steps to move the peace process forward, and the best means of convening a peace conference in the Middle East, which was the main issue in our talks. The talks I held with the U.S. secretary of state in Cairo, dealt with ways of realizing peace in the region, including the paths that lead to it. I have returned to Damascus to avail myself the opportunity to exchange views on the talks I have held in my tour because Syria has an important, key role.

Answering a question on whether he has any new ideas about the peace conference, Bessmertnykh said: We are working to draw up a concept for the peace conference. We began discussing this here in Damascus and continued this discussion with other states. We also discussed the moves to lay a general groundwork for this so that we can proceed on our path.

Answering a question on his meeting with Yasir 'Arafat in Geneva, Bessmertnykh said: Yes.

Afghanistan

Najibullah Receives CPSU Delegation 13 May

LD1305191591 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] Esteemed Najibullah, president of Afghanistan and chairman of the Homeland Party, this morning met at the Homeland Party Central Council headquarters with a high-ranking delegation of the CPSU led by esteemed Yuriy Alekseyevich Manayenkov, secretary of the CPSU. The delegation arrived in Kabul this morning at the official invitation of the Homeland Party to exchange experiences between the parties and to plan effective future joint efforts for ensuring peace and stability in the region.

In the course of the meeting, which was attended by Farid Ahmad Mazdak, member of the Central Council Executive Board and deputy chairman of the Homeland Party, and His Excellency Boris Nikolayevich Pastukhov, ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary of the USSR to the Republic of Afghanistan, esteemed Najibullah spoke about the military-political situation in Afghanistan and the constant efforts of the Homeland Party to ensure peace, end war, seek a political solution to the issue of Afghanistan, and about the realization of national understanding among Afghans. He also spoke about enhancing the Homeland Party's role.

Esteemed Najibullah also shed light on the interference by Pakistan's military circles in Afghanistan's internal affairs and on their obvious lack of interest in a political solution and the establishment of peace and security in the region.

During this meeting, comprehensive information was given in connection with the fundamental transformations that are being realized in the party's structure and ideology based on the resolutions of the second congress of the Homeland Party in accordance with the national reconciliation policy. Also, information was given about ensuring and consolidating democratic principles in internal party life.

Esteemed Manayenkov spoke on the recent changes in the Soviet Union and the resolutions of the recent CPSU Central Committee Plenum and its emphasis on reconstruction and openness in Soviet society.

During this meeting stress was placed on the consolidation of ties between the people of both countries and between the Homeland Party and the CPSU, as well as on joint efforts to ensure peace and stability in the region.

The high-ranking CPSU delegation—led by Yuriy Alekseyevich Manayenkov, secretary of the CPSU—this morning laid a wreath at the martyrs' memorial, while Farid Ahmad Mazdak, member of the Central Council Executive Board and deputy chairman of the Homeland Party, and His Excellency Boris Nikolayevich Pastukhov, ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary of the Soviet Union, were present. The delegation also met this afternoon with the leadership of the National Guard of the Republic of Afghanistan and toured the National Guards' Museum of Honor.

The high-ranking delegation from the CPSU, led by Yuriy Alekseyevich Manayenkov, secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, arrived in Kabul this morning at the official invitation of the Homeland Party Central Council to exchange experiences between the parties and to seek effective ways to ensure peace and stability in the region.

The delegation was welcomed at Kabul International Airport by Farid Ahmad Mazdak and Engineer Nazar Muhammad, members of the Central Council Executive Board and deputy chairmen of the Homeland Party, and by Boris Nikolayevich Pastukhov, ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary of the Soviet Union in Kabul.

Soviet Jets Bomb Rebel Positions in 'Many Areas'

BK1105150491 Hong Kong AFP in English 1441 GMT 11 May 91

[Text] Peshawar, Pakistan, May 11 (AFP)—The Afghan resistance said here Saturday that Soviet jets have been bombing rebel positions in many areas of Afghanistan. The latest attack was on Qeysar District by Soviet aircraft from Uzbekistan after the mujahidin liberated it this week, the resistance MIDIA [MEDIA INFORMATION DEPARTMENT OF ISLAMIC AFGHANISTAN] news agency said. The resistance has made similar claims in the past, but these have never been confirmed independently.

Although the Soviet Union ended its 10-year military intervention in Afghanistan in 1989, it has continued to back the government of President Najibullah politically and materially.

According to MIDIA the resistance government-in-exile Reconstruction Minister Burhanuddin Rabbani apprised Benan Sevan, special representative of the U.N. secretary general, of the bombings at a meeting in the Pakistani border city of Peshawar Thursday.

Mr. Sevan also met the interim government President Sebghatullah Mojaddedi and other resistance leaders to discuss ways of resolving the Afghan problem, MIDIA said.

In another report, the agency said 400 Afghan Government soldiers and militiamen were killed in recent mujahidin operations in Herat on the border with Iran. It said 10 guerrillas died and 30 were wounded in the Herat battles.

Armed Forces Units Seize Weapons in Herat

LD1305221191 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] As a result of combat and mopping-up operations which were carried out yesterday and the day before yesterday by armed forces units in parts of Zendajan

District, Herat Province, a number of extremists, including Sher Khan and Turan Ayub, two of their ringleaders, were crushed and a number were wounded.

According to a report by the [BAKHTAR INFORMATION AGENCY's military section, during these mopping-up and combat operations one launcher unit for surface-to- surface missiles along with 80 rounds of missiles, 175 mortar mines, seven antipersonnel mines, two boxes of hand grenades, 32 mortar rounds, two boxes of DShK ammunition, two Kalashnikovs, and 17,000 ammunition rounds for assorted weapons were seized. One cache of weapons and ammunition and three communication centers, including several hiding places and strongholds of the extremists, along with heavy weapons, were destroyed.

Najibullah Delivers Speech to Party Activists

LD0705150391 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1630 GMT 6 May 91

[Speech by President Najibullah to Homeland Party activists in Kabul on 4 May—recorded]

[Text] Dear comrades: Meetings with party cadres and activists, who are the main executors of its policies in actions has always been useful. They [meetings] have solved many problems in special cases too. [passage indistinct] In today's session, I want to talk about the following important issues:

1. What is the situation in the country? Are we weaker then before or otherwise?
2. What is the [Homeland] Party approach toward the Khowst incident? What lessons are being learned from Khowst?
3. Is the national reconciliation policy halted? Or we have abandoned it.

Let us assess the first issue. What is the situation in the country? Are we weaker than before or not? An answer to this question can only be given on the basis of comparison. That is, do we want to assess our situation in comparison with a time in the past or in comparison with other forces? It it better that we assess today's military-political situation of the country in comparison with the situation more than two years ago, when the Soviet military contingents returned to their homeland; and in comparison with the military-political stance of the sovereign Republic of Afghanistan and the opposition forces stationed in Pakistan at that time.

At that time, not only the extremist opposition and their patrons were predicting the fall of the sovereignty of the Republic of Afghanistan within days and weeks, but, a number of the Western countries, even a number of the Eastern European countries, withdrew their embassy staffs from our country. The Pakistani militarists, by forming an interim government in Rawalpindi, were trying to seek prestige and credit for it. There was only one slogan among our opposition, that was: war to end. If we do not ignore reality, the friendly forces too were expressing [word indistinct] a certain doubt and fear about the future.

There were rumors about the so-called red and green cards [reference to red cards for the Homeland Party and green card identification for the mujahidin] in the city. Naturally, the questions would have come to the mind of number of our friends too as to whether we were able to defend Jalalabad. Whether the highways could remain open. Whether we could realy defend Kabul condidently. And dozens of other questions.

The passage of time shows that the party, the people, and our heroic Armed Forces were able, along with their political allies, to create such shining examples in the defense of the independence, national sovereignty, and territorial integrity of our beloved country. They not only earned the praise and surprise of world public opinion but proved wrong the myths about the transfer of the Rawalpindi government inside the country, the creation of a so-called confederation, and so on. We were not only able to defend all the cities and main and strategic highways and decisively foil the conspiracy of the foreign enemies to embark on a 7 March coup d'etat which was planned by Pakistan's intelligence service by employing Gulbuddin and the treacherous Shah Nawaz and his accomplices. We were also able to resort to such military maneuvers which (?were an impossible task) in previous years, despite the existence of more than 100,000 Soviet forces.

You have witnessed the expansion of security belts around the city of Kabul and other cities of the country; the orderly transfer of food from the borders to the center, and from the center to the provinces, such as supplying the provinces of Qandahar, Zabol, Ghor, and Badghis by land, also the recent successful operations in the direction of Tangi Waghjan, Lowgar Province, and so on.

The years of independently defending the country have been years of notable military-political victories. The sovereignty of the Republic of Afghanistan was able, while simultaneously carrying out military affairs, to consistently follow the democratization of political life in the country, based on the Constitution of the Republic of Afghanistan. Maintaining normal activity in the Parliament of the Republic of Afghanistan and the commencement of democratic elections for the municipalities with the cooperation of the government of esteemed Khaliqyar is a good example of the practicality of the formation of a coalition government with broad bases, as well as the multiparty system and [word indistinct] in the country, and the creation of the peace front—are our main political gains. All our gains are the results of the correct policy, unity, and cohesion, dynamism, and effective activity by our party.

During this period, our party acted as a main political force in the role of the planner, supporter, and active executor of the national reconciliation policy, and strove to unite the sound forces of society based on realistic

thinking. The party itself also changed symmetrically to the new realities. Today our party is not the emotional and easily led party of a few years ago; the power of national thinking has (?entered) into it more than any other time.

The successful holding of the second party congress and the approval of a new policy and a charter; appointing party authorities from the secretary of a ward to the level of party chairmanship by means of elections and the elected way; organizing free and open exchanges of views on the imporant issues of the party life—all these actions without a doubt manifest the unprecedented development of democracy and a climate of (?openness).

Let us view the situation of the opposition at this period of time. From the military point of view all their plans, with the exception of Khowst, on which I will talk later, failed completely. They transformed the aspriations of their foreign patrons into hopelessness. Terroristic attacks and missile launches not only brought them no positive result but caused them more hatred and indignation among the public opinions of the country and the world.

From the political point of view, the government in Rawalpindi is nothing but a name. Pakistan itself does not know how to get rid of it. Their so-called elections plan and a grand assembly also had a short life, like a bubble, and they admitted to its failure quickly themselves. Their so-called diplomatic striving during the gulf war not only caused dissatisfaction among the Muslim people of Afghansitan, but it caused anger even among their foreign patrons, as revealed by Peter Tomsen's statement.

From the domestic point of view, despite our good intentions and aspirations concerning the strengthening of unity of all Afghans, they were not only unable to take even one step in this direction, but with the passing of every day, are (?affected) by incurable dispersion. As an example, in addition to scores of bloody clashes, the Konar incident which came about as a result of rivalries between the bands of Gulbuddin and Sayaf, became the cause of [words indistinct] despite their endless [words indistinct]. The provincial party council of Konar held official mourning for the death of civilians in this incident.

The extremist wing of the opposition, through insisting on the outmoded slogan of war [words indistinct], proved its complete talent in realizing the new realities of the world and of our society and (?has) itself (?signed) the document of its complete isolation and rejection. In short, if we have been on the side of defending our national interests through independent defense, the extremist opposition has (?sided) with the position of linkage to foreign military and espionage circles and attempting to crary out the military-political aims in the country planned by the foreigners. If our stand has been to defend democracy, national unity and conciliation, the stand of the extremists is groundless [words indistinct] in national [words indistinct] and traitorous attempt toward expanding the dimension of war and [word indistinct].

The the international arena: Relations between the Republic of Afghanistan and other countries of the world, parliaments, international organizations and other international (?parties) have become further strengthened, and this has been recognised as an undeniable reality in every sort of political solution. Whereas the extremists have been [words indistinct]. In this way we have the right to say, with confidence and pride, that far from becoming weaker during the past years, the positions of our party and sovereignty, (?compared) to that of our opponents and political rivals, have become greatly strengthened.

It should be admitted that the economic situation in the country [words indistinct] and, despite the measures taken, [words indistinct] and assisting in the increase of income to the [word indistinct] strata of the society, price increases persist. [passage indistinct] This, on the one hand, is emanating from [word indistinct] fluctuation in the international economy, as a result of which almost all countries of the region and the world have been affected, and on the other hand, the [words indistinct]. In order to eliminate this problem, all-round measures (?have been taken) during the current year so that the spring cultivation drive (?will) be implemented successfully, and it is expected that wide areas of land (?will be cultivated in this drive).

I would like to give you the good news concerning the resumption of gas exports to the USSR, which constitutes one of the major items in the country's (?cash revenue); this will be started in the near future. Also the extraordinary economic commission, under the chairmanship of esteemed Fazl Haq Khaliqyar, prime minister of the Republic of Afghanistan, has further measures in hand [words indistinct]. It is necessary that the economic council of the central council and the party provincial councils too identity, within the scope of their possibilities, practical proposals for improving the situation, and put forward their proposal to the state organs.

Comrades, (?why do we elaborate in such a detail on this issue). We have no intention of encouraging comrades to wrongly seek comfort and simplify matters by presenting a list of successes and ignoring our weaknesses. However, we would like to say, comrades, that the path we have so far passed through has been a correct and sensible path. The country's salvation from the misery and success of the party in its service to the people is entailed in the pursuit of this path. This is important because after the incident at Khowst some wittingly or unwittingly are trying to lessen our party's successes, call the national reconciliation policy pointless, and (?spread rumours) about Khowst as a great victory for the enemy and the beginning of our annihilation. Therefore we must now elaborate on the second question.

How do we assess the party vis-a-vis events in Khowst? What are the main lessons of this episode? Would a scrupulous analysis of the politico-military situation, even in the second half of last year [ending 21 March 1991], reach the conclusion that Pakistan had been

unstable by the results of the Afghans defense of independence and the growing attraction of national reconciliation? Because the Pakistanis saw their more than a decade and a half of direct investments in the extremists ruined this probably incited them fight severely and in other words for their last fight.

This conclusion was clearly made at the general executive board session in January-February and specific demands were made on civil party organizations and the Afghan Armed Forces. Following that, in general sessions of councils, wards, and work committees across the country the question of strengthening defensive measures and the need to prepare for spring battles was discussed. Adhering to the decisions of the session we in the Armed Forces Supreme Command started to take measures to pinpoint the principle directions of enemy strikes and determine which measures should be initiated.

One of those places was Khowst, about which I have spoke in detail in previous speeches. In the wake of Khowst developments the executive board convened an emergency session and took under consideration the situation in an atmosphere of friendly frankness and held a serious discussion. It approved a memorandum on this on 3 April which was conveyed to all party organizations. The memorandum answered principled questions that came to mind to party members [words indistinct].

No doubt the Khowst incident was a painful incident for our party. The incident taught us that we should not become arrogant because of our successes and we should take into account the worst possible probabilities while we are counting them. The Khowst incident teaches that we must (?seriously control our confidence). And we must not forget that the enemy is scrupulously watching our weaknesses and tries to [words indistinct]. We must also learn throughly the fact that until total and certain peace is restored in our country party members have no right to drop their state of vigilance and they must not abondon their political awareness. In other words, the enemy still nurtures the thought of the physical annihilation of our party, especially because in the meantime other important issues have taken place. First, the majority of Afghans, even on the other side of the border, do not support war and bloodshed in their country in the interests of Pakistanis. And the so-called victory that has been gained by the hands of aliens is not a victory but a shameful act.

[Words indistinct] The extremists showed that they are lacking in political talent and leadership. They only understand destruction and bloodshed. The recent events in Khowst transformed [words indistinct].

Thirdly and the most important thing of all is that Khowst proved once again that there is no military solution to the questions of Afghanistan. Even the occupation of this or that city by the extremists has not become a cause for their closeness and cohesion, but on the contrary causes them further violence and disintegration and brings about further hardships for our compatriots. In brief if Khowst is a great loss to us, it has not been in any way whatsoever a gain to our opponents. The aim of the military and [word indistinct] circles of Pakistan, however, is the destruction of this common home of the Afghans [words indistinct].

Dear comrades, I would like to draw your attention to another important matter. It seems that a number of our party comrades have not learned a lesson, even from the Khowst incident. They are engaged in a number of rumors that inevitably cause weakness in the party and reduce its [words indistinct]. A number of them try to give life to the decadent corpse of factional emotions and through giving the color of so-called such and such faction against such and such faction of the party, turn even the Khowst incident into an internal party matter. A number of others are engaged in provoking, without thinking, national emotions vis-a-vis the said incident. Each one of the aforementioned prejudicial provocations in their turn tends to provoke extremist prejudice and approach by the opposition and [words indistinct]. Now you judge for yourselves. What do the ISI [Pakistan's Inter-Service Intelligence] and all sworn enemies of Afghanistan want more than to once again inflame the flames of national and factional fire inside our party and our country? And, we, instead of wisely defending the homeland, burn in the fire of selfishness or at least withdraw our forces from the front lines and get involved in putting out this [words indistinct].

Asking questions, in particular in complicated situations, is a natural action. Questions should be asked. However, a standard should be created beforehand. The asking or every sort of question, in particular under complicated situations, must be [words indistinct], should increase our strength and energy further in carrying out our present important tasks and also should be the cause of mobilizing forces, and not to the contrary. [Words indistinct] that it is not possible to supply answers at once and immediately to all the complicated incidents such as in Khowst. In order to deeply realize every truth, time is (?needed). Therefore, I invite [words indistinct] the comrades to their broadness of view in judgement and cool- headedness in every incident. (?Let) no one think that the Khowst incident has caused weakness in the unity of our party or [words indistinct].

The successful operations in Tangi-e Waghjan, which has been exemplary—from the viewpoint of participation by the sons of all various fraternal nationalities in the country as well as from the viewpoint of command coordination between the personnel of the organs and various units of our armed forces—is a clear proof of the strong unity and solidarity of the party [words indistinct].

The experiences of the victorious operations of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Afghanistan in Tangi-e Waghjan once again clearly showed that the Armed Forces of the Republic of Afghanistan are capable of discharging their duties in the best way. You know that

the military doctrine of the Republic of Afghanistan is a defensive doctrine, and in the framework of this doctrine, over the past two years the Armed Forces of the Republic of Afghanistan have fulfilled their tasks in such a way that all of them have shown a humanist characteristic, especially in military duties. [Words indistinct] for instance the alleviation of economic blockade of the cities, the expansion of security belts for the prevention of human losses in cities, the insuring of highways security for the transport of goods needed by the people, the change in the stationing of some units in some border provinces to create a peace zone bordering Pakistan for the return of refugees, and a number of other acts all of which show that the Republic of Afghanistan has taken its military steps in a way that should avoid losses in the Armed Forces and in civilians.

On the other hand, you noticed that in Tangi-e Waghjan the largest weapons and ammunition depots of the extremist opposition, especially Gulbuddin's band, were set up with the direct help of Pakistan's ISI. Its aim was to attack the city of Kabul. According to available reports, this attack was planned to take place simultaneously with offensive operations of the extremist troops in other parts of the country. Why did the extremists choose Tangi-e as a main arming and combat base? The choice [words indistinct], because in the past also, after the fall of His Majesty Amanullah Khan the forces which contended for power captured Kabul from this same place. This time too, an attack on Kabul on a much larger scale was planned from Tangi-e. Luckily, units of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Afghanistan were able to mount in 48 hours such a speedy and harmonized operation as to [words indistinct]. And the regular army of the extremists, the so-called Lashkar-e Esar, was shattered. Even Pakistani and Western media admitted that the Armed Forces of the Republic of Afghanistan destroyed the largest base and capability of the extremist opposition, which was intended to be used in an attack on Kabul.

In the Tangi-e Waghajan operation it was demonstrated to the extremist opposition that if they want to impose themselves on the nation through military force, the Republic of Afghanistan, despite the difficult situation created by the 12-year-old war, has the capability and ability to make a resolute reaction.

The Tangi-e Waghjan operation not only [words indistinct] and changed the situation in favor of the Republic of Afghanistan but also faced the opposition with the serious problem of supplying arms in Wardak and some places adjacent to Kabul, and some provinces.

Right now our staunch party members are engaged in the fulfillment of their national mission, being aware of the sensitivity of the present situation, fighting shoulder to shoulder and together with other patriotic forces. [Words indistinct] Pakistani military make efforts to synchronize with the expansion of their interference and aggression in speaking of belief in a political solution to the situation in Afghanistan. After the Khowst incident they tried to inculcate in public opinion the idea that the occupation of Khowst was the start of a kind of political solution of the Afghan problem. But at the same they openly encouraged extremists to attack Gardeyz, Ghazni, Badakhshan, Jalalabad, Paghman, Kandahar, Zabol, Kabul and some other cities. Recently they alleged that the Konar incident and the Tanie-e Waghjan successful operation have damaged the process of political solution. Let us see what is involved in this alleged peace process, Pakistani style. First, it can happily be concluded that even the Pakistani military are obliged to accept that there is no other way but a political solution for the settlement of the Afghan issue, and the one who loses this chance [words indistinct].

It is possible [words indistinct] by involving us in serious military activities through provocative actions and evading a political solution, a distorted image of the realities of the recent years has taken shape, (?will be) put forward before the people of the world. That is, the side of Pakistan has been considered as the defender of peace and a political solution, and the Afghan side opposed to it. However, behind all these political [words indistinct] the sovereignty of the republic of Afghanistan should leave the (?scene) and let the plan of [words indistinct] of Afghanistan-Pakistan confederation (?become a reality), or at least let the extremist puppet groups of that country create a government in Afghanistan linked to Pakistan.

Comrades, this manner of approaching the question is contrary to a sound mind and has no aim but public deception. Realizing this matter that the aforementioned plans are simply indicative of the views of the militarist circles of Pakistan, we hope the state and political forces of Pakistan realistically assess the proposals of the Republic of Afghanistan concerning a political solution of problems and the normalization of relations between the two countries, and will take specific practical steps toward the creation of an atmosphere of understanding and reciprocal realization. It is natural we expect that such steps of goodwill should be coupled with the cessation of interference and aggressive actions against the Republic of Afghanistan. As far as it depends on us, the Republic of Afghanistan for a long time now has consistently made efforts toward reaching a political solution to the problems, and wide diplomatic activities from our side (?are continuing) for this purpose. We have put forward a comprehensive mechanism for peace and are ready to receive without prejudice every sort of other peace proposal. We have invited the United Nations, the guarantor countries of the Geneva accords, the Non-aligned Movement, Arab and Islamic countries to cooperate with us in reaching a peaceful solution to the questions. We have put forward specific proposals for the improvement of relations with our neighbours, in particular with the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. all these in fact [words indistinct] in our sincerity in believing in a political solution and specific plan.

I would like to emphasize that we, in all our plans and proposals put forward before our people and the international community, are (?sincere). No adventurist militarist actions by the war-mongering circles of Pakistan and the extremists under their protection can deviate us from our policy for peace. Taking the position of and strongly protecting the policy of peace is the greatest honor of the Homeland Party, and we consistently defend this honor. At the same time defending the homeland, national honors, and the cause of peace is our legitimate right; and we, through pursuing the traditions of our ancestors, put all our capabilities in the service of this legitimate defense, which has no threat or aggressive aim against any other country whatsoever.

Those who think they will gain through military pressure at the negotiation table must know that they on the wrong track. The people and the Armed Forces of the Republic of Afghanistan, who are the staunch defenders of the policy of national reconciliation, have many a time proved that they are not ready to take even one step backwards. Once again we will give an appropriate reply to any kind of inflammatory act of war by the extremists and their alien supporters. I would like to remark, comrades, that with coming of the success of a political solution, extemist forces thrash on every side with violence like a drowning person and want to fulminate adventurism. Therefore, in the spring and summer of this year heavy battles may well occur. But in this test too with reliance on the unity, power, and patriotism of our party, we will succeed and will implement our party's peace-loving program. Thus, once again we call on all party members, if in the ranks of the Armed Forces, to increase combat capability of their units with valor and intelligence and resolutely prevent any negative phenomenon that reduces combat readiness, and campaign against it. If serving in civilian institutions alongside the honest discharge of the usual duties [words indistinct] assist the strengthening of the Armed Forces' ranks, and by joining homeland guards and self-defense groups defend your institutions, localities, and districts. We call on party council and, work committees of the party to increase their political awareness, and besides all-out participation in increasing the defensive power of the country, keep up the normal processes of their institutions, administrations, party organizations, and related areas.

Now we touch on another question: whether or not all those military preparations show that national reconciliation has stopped or at least that we are no longer interested in it. No, never. National reconciliation is not stopped for even one moment, and we also will not stop working for even one moment. Because national reconciliation is the voice of the heart of the million of miserable Afghans inside and outside the country. It is the strategy and the line approved by the congress of our party and the only way of getting out of this situation caused by war in our society. National reconciliation is a policy that cannot retreat, because its moving force is the people; the fate of any political system is determined in final analysis by them. Because politically organized forces that reflect the will of the people have learned about its necessity more than at any other time and are prepared to cooperate for its implementation. Because the composition of the forces engaged in the present war entail such a wide spectrum that not one of the forces or organizations is capable of ending the war alone and ensuring peace and stability in the country. Thus, national reconciliation is the main aim and base of all party policies.

What relates to the practical aspects of this issue: It is to be said, as we reported in the executive board's month of Dalw session, dialogue and negotiation with armed internal commanders has been accelerated and a larger number of them became ready for the signing of agreements on bilateral cooperation. With the passage of every day a larger number of them abondon their former positions, and stand in defense of the sovereignty of the Republic of Afghanistan. Broad contacts with effective circles of all formations and political personalities, believing in national interests, go on [words indistinct]. I would like to once again call on armed internal commander, formations, organizations, and political personalities who support peace and who believe in the interests of Afghanistan.

As a result of the continuation of war, every day and every hour costs the lives of more of (?our compatriots) and the further destruction of [words indistinct] which is [words indistinct] to all the people of Afghanistan. Let us not lose any more time. Let us by pursuing the teachings of the sacred religion of Islam and the laudable traditions of our forefathers, courageously settle the present differences and disputes through direct negotiations and dialogue. In this manner the pleasure of Almighty God as well as the [words indistinct] of our war-weary people will be achieved. If various nations such as Nicaragua, Namibia, Libya, and Cambodia could find a solution to their very deep-rooted disputes, why cannot the Afghans by themselves find a solution to their problems? Our nation has always had the talent to act in unity in historical [words indistinct] and undoubtedly, once again, it will display (?such a quality).

Dear comrades, now we should touch upon another subject which is of interest to all of our party members and its sympathizers:

If the Homeland Party and the sovereignty of the Republic of Afghanistan has been recognized today as a strong and living reality in all international forums, and that without its active participation, no political solution of the problems of Afghanistan is possible whatsoever—and that you are recognized in international public opinion as the bearers of the banner of peace and the courageous defenders of the homeland—all these are the result of displaying unity, initiative in action, and political cool-headedness, the high realization of national interests and action against problems which our party and people have shown.

The role of the party in the future, too—not in some other place or by other forces, but directly—(?depends)

on our (?unity). To whatever extent we are united and cohesive today and, through leaving out differences and considerations in style and even differences in outlook, engage in carrying out principal tasks—to whatever extent that we can prove our ability in defending our stands and the [words indistinct] capability of our system, to whatever extent that we can prove that we have the talent to implement democracy and can compromise toward achieving national unity—to that extent, the role of our party and its political (?renewal and) the sovereignty of the Republic of Afghanistan in the future political [words indistinct].

Without doubt we have the capability of [words indistinct] and so far we have shown such ability to our compatriots and to the people of the world. [passage indistinct] We have the support of millions of our war-weary compatriots inside and outside the country. We have understanding with a wide range of moderate forces in support of peace, be it among the commanders inside the country and in the political organizations and political personalities residing in the West. Finally, we have strong support from our international friends. As you know, recently a high-ranking state delegation of the friendly country of the Soviet Union headed by [name indistinct], the deputy head of the Defense Council of the Soviet Union, visited Kabul. The delegation resolutely expressed support for the consistent efforts of the Republic of Afghanistan toward realizing the policy of national reconciliation, our peaceful activities in the sphere of foreign policy, and also the courageous defense by the people and Armed Forces of the Republic of Afghanistan of the independence and territorial integrity of the country, and assured us of the continued political, economic, and military assistance of the Soviet Union to the Republic of Afghanistan in accordance with the existing treaties and in line with the national interests of both friendly countries. They assure us that this assistance [words indistinct] will not only not decrease, but will continue and (?increase). This warm support expressed by the great friend of our people for the stands of the Republic of Afghanistan foiled the groundless propaganda of our enemies concerning the so-called isolation of the Republic of Afghanistan from its internaitonal friends.

This gives us further strength and energy toward the realization of the humanitarian policy of our party—which is in the interest of peace and stability in the region and in the world too. In this way we have all the opportunities at our disposal to bring our policy to success. The opposition has, however, not [words indistinct]. We must only learn that we should break our habit of devaluing our gains and overvaluing the gains of our opponents.

We must learn that in politics we should not display impatience, like a child who expects the fruit trees of his home garden to produce quickly. We should learn that in politics time is an important element in [words indistinct]. The winner is the force which correctly realizes the demands of every moment and—without striving ahead of time or (?conflicting) with it—[words indistinct]. I am completely confident that our party comrades, these true sons of our lofty homeland, Afghanistan, realize all these matters and, with firmness and steadfastiness, are accomplishing their historical mission.

Success comes from God. [applause]

Bangladesh

Dhaka Says $1.5 Billion 'Urgently' Needed

BK1305163891 Hong Kong AFP in English 1549 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] Dhaka, May 13 (AFP)—The Bangladesh Government, weathering criticsms for not assessing the damage from April's cyclone in the country, said in a report Monday that it urgently needed 1.5 billion dollars for its relief operation.

Unveiling a preliminary damage estimate report it has given to donor nations, the government said the figure was based on initial findings of "urgent needs" in districts devastated by the April 29 cyclone.

"The figures could change... it could go up," Information Secretary Quazi Mohammad Munzur-i-Mawla said a day after Dhaka presented the first official report on the disaster to friendly countries. He said the report lists 780,000 houses completely damaged, 773,000 partially destroyed, 1,046 kilometres (628 miles) of roads, 156 bridges, and 122 dykes washed away in the cyclone and an accompanying tidal wave.

More than one million cattle perished in the cyclone, he said, adding that the report lists 1,008 people still missing two weeks after the disaster struck 16 of Bangladesh's 64 districts. Dhaka has said that at least 139,000 people died in the cyclone. "The death toll has not yet gone up," the official said.

"We need the estimated sum for urgent reconstruction work and to extent immediate aid to people," Mr. Mawla said, but did not disclose when the government would launch its second exercise to prepare a detailed report. He also did not give a break-down of amounts needed for reconstruction and relief projects.

The three-month-old government of Begum Khaleda Zia has been accused of failing to aid cyclone survivors quickly enough, a charge she denies. The opposition has also said delays in preparing a damage report were a main reason for the small amount of foreign donations trickling into cash-strapped Bangladesh, which is engaged in a massive relief operation.

Mr. Mawla said Dhaka has received a total of 244.55 million dollars in aid from 29 countries and several humanitarian organisations as of Monday.

'Multipurpose Buildings' Planned for Coast

BK1305164091 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia says the government has decided to construct multipurpose buildings in the coastal areas of the country which will be used as shelters and warehouses for relief materials during the calamities. She was talking to CARE [Cooperative for American Relief to Everywhere] president, Dr. Philip Johnson, who called on her in Dhaka today. The prime minister said in normal times, these buildings will be used as schools and hospitals. She said the government will welcome help and assistance (?from governments) and countries and agencies in making this program a success. The CARE president, who is currently visiting Bangladesh to see the extent of damage, said his organization will render all possible help in this regard. The Philippines ambassador to Bangladesh, Professor C. Pastores, also called on the prime minister in Dhaka today. He handed over a check for U.S. $2,400 to Begum Khaleda for the prime minister's relief fund.

Bhutan's King Sends $100,000 for Survivors

BK1105164291 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 11 May 91

[Text] Bhutanese Minister of State for Trade and Commerce Om Pradhan, now in Dhaka, handed over to the prime minister a letter from Bhutanese King Jigme Singye Wangchuk, expressing deep sorrow at the loss of life and property in the 29 April cyclone. Mr. Pradhan handed over to the prime minister a check for $100,000 in aid for the cyclone survivors.

Opposition Assails Government's Relief Measures

BK1105163291 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 11 May 91

[Excerpt] The Jatiya Sangsad [parliament] has continued general discussion on the post-cyclone situation. Taking part in the discussion today, the deputy leader of the house, Education Minister Professor A.Q.M. Badruddoja Chowdhury, said the government will sympathetically consider proposals to exempt agricultural and soft loans and provide seeds and agricultural inputs free of cost to the affected farmers in the cyclone-hit areas. Replying to opposition criticism, he said the government is conducting relief work through its agencies, while major political parties like BNP [Bangladesh Nationalist Party], Awami League, CPB [Communist Party of Bangladesh], and Jamaat-i-Islami are also working separately.

Earlier, the treasury bench members commended the relief and rescue operation of the government as prompt and timely. They said the response to the Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's call for international assistance has been very encouraging. They also stressed the need for not taking the advantage of this human problem of unprecedented magnitude for political end.

The opposition members generally criticized the government's relief measures. They demanded that the entire cyclone and tidal bore-battered zone be declared calamity-affected area. Twenty members took part in the debate in two sittings today. [passage omitted]

India

Shekhar Denies 'Secret Talks' With Punjab Rebels

BK1305130291 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] Mr. Chandra Shekhar says the center will not close its doors for talks with the Punjab militants. Addressing a series of meetings in Madhya Pradesh, Mr. Chandra Shekhar clarified that he is not holding secret talks with the militants. He charged the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] and the Congress-I with conspiring to keep the Punjab tangle alive for their political ends.

The BJP leader, Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee, on the other hand again alleged that Mr. Chandra Shekhar is not taking the nation into confidence about his talks with Punjab militants. He said in Lucknow the BJP would welcome the militants if they are prepared to join the national mainstream through the democratic process.

Jullundhur Independent Candidate Killed in Punjab

BK1305102091 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] In Punjab, one more candidate for the assembly election has been killed. According to an official spokesman in Chandigarh, the body of Mr. Kamaljit Singh, an independent from Jullundhur cantonment assembly constituency, reported missing since Friday [10 May], was found near Pragpur village on Saturday.

'Pak-Trained Militants' Arrested in Kashmir

BK1105161791 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 11 May 91

[Text] In the Kashmir Valley, 55 subversives, including three Pak-trained militants, have been arrested by the security forces. An official press release issued in Srinagar this evening says 48 subversives were arrested in Anantnag District and seven, including three Pak-trained militants, from Srinagar city.

Two 'Militants' Killed in Kupwara District

BK1305161091 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] In Jammu and Kashmir, the situation in the border town of Punch is reported to be under control. Curfew was relaxed for some time today to enable students to appear at the state board examination. No untoward incident was reported. The deputy commissioner of Punch has convened a meeting of prominent

citizens and unemployed youths to seek their cooperation in maintaining peace and order in the border town.

In Kashmir Valley, two militants and one security personnel were killed in separate incidents in Kupwara District during the last 24 hours. In Srinagar, some areas under the police stations of Khaniar and Safakadal remained under curfew during the day as a precautionary measure.

JKLF Calls For 10-Day Unilateral Cease-Fire

BK1305095891 Hong Kong AFP in English 0924 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] Jammu, India, May 13 (AFP)—Kashmir's dominant Muslim separatist group announced a unilateral cease-fire beginning Monday in memory of a Muslim religious leader assassinated in the troubled Indian province a year ago.

The Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) said it would suspend its attacks on Indian Government forces for 10 days in honour of Mirwaiz Maulvi Farooq, Kashmir's high priest who was shot dead May 21, 1990. The assassins, who stormed his Srinagar city residence, were never caught or identified.

JKLF Deputy Commander Jaffar Kashmiri said by telephone from Srinagar, the state's summer capital, that his group had [words indistinct] state where Muslim militants are campaigning for secession. But the widely respected cleric had also spoken out against extreme forms of violence, including kidnappings by militants.

Kashmir government officials were not immediately available in Srinagar or here, the northern border state's winter capital, for comment on the unexpected JKLF announcement.

Meanwhile, a general strike called by Muslim attorneys to protest the alleged flouting of court orders by the administration paralysed Srinagar city and the rest of the Kashmir Valley Monday, witnesses said. Shops and business establishments, government offices, banks, post offices and educational institutions were closed in response to the protest call by the Jammu and Kashmir High Court Bar Association.

The association said it was protesting against the government's refusal to heed a court order and bring to Srinagar bodies of 91 Muslim separatists killed by the Indian Army near the Pakistan border on May 5.

Crippling strikes called by guerrillas and their sympathisers have become a regular feature in Kashmir, a former tourist haven where the Muslim secessionist campaign has left more than 2,300 people dead since January 1990.

The PRESS TRUST OF INDIA (PTI) said security forces shot dead two Muslim militants in a gunbattle in Kashmir's Kupwara District late Sunday, but gave no details.

India accuses Pakistan, which disputes Kashmir's 1947 accession to New Delhi and holds the northern third of the state, of supporting the continuing unrest.

Islamabad supports the Kashmir campaign, calling it a struggle for self-determination, but refutes Indian allegations that it is harbouring or arming the Muslim guerrillas.

Pakistani-Aided Kashmir Unrest Linked to Polls

BK1105151991 Delhi General Overseas Service in English 1010 GMT 11 May 91

[S.K. Nayyar commentary]

[Text] The continued infiltration of militants into Jammu and Kashmir from across the border has confirmed that Pakistan is making a concerted bid to create disturbances in the valley coinciding with the general elections in this country. The strategists in Islamabad had waited for a wide dispersal of the Indian security forces for the coming elections to enable the Pakistani-trained militants to sneak into Kashmir without much resistance. However, Islamabad's calculations had gone awry, as the latest batch of militants who infiltrated into Kashmir were beaten back, leaving behind around 80 casualties. The infiltration was undertaken under the last four days in the midst of heavy artillery mortar arms fire from across the border in a bid to divert attention of the Indian security forces. The area chosen for crossing over in the Kupwara District was at an altitude of about 11,000 feet, which is usually thinly manned. The seizures included 43 AK-47, six [word indistinct] machine guns, four rocket launchers, and 8,000 rounds of ammunition and grenades.

The present misadventure by Pakistan should be viewed in the backdrop of the false propaganda unleashed in the valley. Besides, the programs beamed on television from across the border sought to give the impression of widespread clashes among various groups in the valley. There are 38 training centers for militants in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir and 42 in different parts of Pakistan. With all 4-5,000 militants already trained and waiting to cross over to India, there is a need for strict vigilance on the border by the Indian security forces. The militants' masters in Pakistan abetted and advised them to step up violence in the valley and make political personalities favoring peace initiatives as their special targets. It is tragic that for Islamabad the Kashmir issue has become a source of political and financial help from all kinds of forces in other countries. It is a case of creating a crisis and cashing in on it.

But the events in the last one week have shown that Pakistan is riding a tiger. It has, however, so far succeeded to some extent in maligning India in the world fora by painting a wrong picture of the situation in the valley. Such nefarious games do not always last nor do they pay forever. That Pakistan is not happy with the JKLF [Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front] is an important development in the new scenario that is emerging in the valley. The bomb blast in Rawalpindi on

8 May in which 10 people were killed in the clinic of a doctor having links with the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front is nothing but an extension of the fierce rivalry that has broken out between the JKLF and pro-Pakistan Hizbul mujahidin.

The JKLF chief, Javed Ahmad Mir, in a statement issued in Srinagar, had blamed Pakistan for the death of 80 militants in an encounter with Indian security forces last Sunday. He had also been opposing the demand of pro-Pakistan Hizbul mujahidin for the merger of Kashmir with Pakistan.

It is time India must tell Pakistan that intrusion and infiltration would not be tolerated. Pakistan has exposed itself and proved its criminal intentions when its foreign secretary condemned the killing of infiltrators by the Indian security forces. Pakistan is committing gross violations of international norms and practises and is steadily allowing itself to be dragged openly into the politics of the valley. That is surely going to prove very costly for Pakistan. The Solarz subcommittee warning that the United States may have to cut its aid to Pakistan if it continues to support the terrorists in Kashmir is another indication of how Pakistani designs are getting exposed the world over. This and the Amnesty International's firm refusal to intervene for the release of the Swedish engineers should convince Pakistan that the Goebbelsian logic of turning lies into truth has become outdated in this age of information explosion.

India is not as weak as it would superficially appear to be and has an ace or two to persuade Pakistan to pursue a moderate and saner line. Simultaneously, India will have to mount diplomatic pressure, especially through the U.S.A. and the European Community members, to divert Pakistan from its present policy of all-out assistance to the militants.

Ordinance on Action Against Public Servants

BK0205170391 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 2 May 91

[Text] The center's prior sanction has been made mandatory for the courts to take action against the public servants of a state government for alleged offenses during president's rule.

The president promulgated an ordinance today amending Section 197 of the Code of Criminal Procedure for the purpose. It comes into effect with immediate effect. The ordinance enlarges the scope of the term public servants to include magistrates and judges. It also makes a similar provision in respect of law enforcing agencies during president's rule in a state.

Our correspondent says the ordinance has become necessary in view of the prevailing situation in the troubletorn states of Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, and Assam. It allays apprehensions of both government and police officials that a new government coming to power after the elections may take action against them for any of their acts during the course of their duties. Their fears are based on the fact that the prior sanction of state governments was enough so far to proceed against them.

Talks With Pakistan on Telecommunications Begin

BK0805053491 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 8 May 91

[Text] A meeting of telecommunications experts from Pakistan and India has begun in New Delhi in which steps to make telecommunication connections between the two countries more modern will be reviewed. This is the eighth round of meetings on telecommunication connections between Pakistan and India.

Editorial Urges SAARC To Assist Bangladesh

BK1205095591 Delhi PATRIOT in English 4 May 91 p 4

[Editorial: "SAARC for Bangladesh"]

[Text] Almost every year with ruthless regularity nature seems to wreak its vengeance upon Bangladesh. The cyclone which hit the country's coastline, devastating Chittagong in particular, has resulted in the death of about one lakh people, according to available reports. In terms of damages caused—both loss of human lives and properties—the latest visitation has been the worst in memory. For a country that ranks among the world's poorest, the catastrophic ravages of the deluge can only mean a shattering setback to its economy and society. What makes the tragedy even more agonising is its aggravation due to man-made factors. In fact, because of its low lying topography, Bangladesh is permanently at the mercy not only of nature but of the environmental depredation of man. Demographic pressures leading to haphazard growth of human settlements in low lying areas, the resultant deforestation which results in loss of the buffer zone provided by the trees against storms, increasing sedimentation which aggravates coastal inundation, are all man-made factors that have vastly increased the country's vulnerability to cyclonic fury. Besides, the non-availability of cyclone warning systems and communication network and also adequate cyclone shelters speak of inadequacy of preparedness to face such a calamity in a country known to be flood-prone by virtue of its geographical location in the estuary of three major rivers. Obviously, all countries must unhesitatingly extend every assistance to Bangladesh in its hour of distress. Especially, the crisis is an occasion for SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] countries to cooperate to help alleviate the sufferings of a member-nation. In fact, as far back as 1988, President Ershad of Bangladesh had called for an expert-level meeting of SAARC countries to explore joint efforts to meet threats posed by natural calamities. Such a step would not only provide a useful fora for the countries of the region to coordinate their policies on environment but would go a long way in proving the viability of regional cooperation in South Asia. Indeed, in view of the fact that according to a

warning issued by the United Nations Environment Programme and World Meteorological Organisation, three countries of the region—Pakistan, Bangladesh and Maldives—face a danger of their coastal areas being submerged by the rising sea as a result of the green house effect, the latest cyclonic havoc highlights the need to move environment degradation to the top of the SAARC agenda. All countries of the region face a common peril in population explosion and the adverse impact of climate change. Increasing exposure of the population of these countries to the dangers of storm surges is but one of the risks arising out of climatic changes. India has escaped what might have been a calamity because the cyclone that has devastated large areas of Bangladesh was initially directed towards our eastern coast. It is in this context that cooperation among SAARC countries to attenuate the impact of a grave danger need hardly be stressed. South Asia is a poor region, but it is not so poor that its peoples cannot pool their resources to relieve the distress of Bangladesh.

Iran

Saudi Envoy Examines GCC, Tehran Cooperation

LD1305162191 Tehran IRNA in English 1421 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] Tehran, May 13, IRNA—The (Persian) Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] and the Islamic Republic of Iran are studying prospects for cooperation in the future security arrangements for the region, Saudi Arabian charge d'affaires in Tehran, Badr 'Uthman Bakish, has told the Persian daily RESALAT.

In an interview published by the daily Monday, he said Saudi Arabia and other Persian Gulf countries cannot overlook Iran's role, since the Islamic Republic is an important country in the region.

In fact, Bakish warned "a real danger is threatening the region as long as Saddam (Husayn) is in power in Iraq."

Taking up the annual hajj pilgrimage (3rd week of June), where Iranian Muslims are to perform their divine obligations after being kept out for three consecutive years, he said "facilities have been prepared for the 115,000 Iranian pilgrims...

"The Saudi Embassy in Tehran is issuing visas for the Iranian pilgrims free of charge, and from the depth of my heart I pray for the Islamic Republic of Iran headed by President Hashemi-Rafsanjani, and also for the Iranian pilgrims, to achieve what they wish during the hajj."

On the venue for the rally displaying antipathy towards unbelievers, Bakish said that officials of the two countries were discussing the matter.

Following the triumph of the Islamic revolution in Iran in 1979, the antipathy rally, in accordance with divine injunctions, became a regular feature of the hajj, and it was during one of those rallies in Mecca near the Holy Ka'bah on July 31, 1987, that Saudi security forces massacred over 400 pilgrims who were peacefully demonstrating against the U.S.-Zionist hegemony over the world of Islam.

Asked what guarantees exist that the tragic massacre of pilgrims will not be repeated, Bakish said officials of the two countries were in close contact to see that the hajj ceremony is held in a "peaceful atmosphere".

On the payment of blood-money for the victims, who mostly included the disabled and the women, he said Iranian and Saudi envoys were discussing the issue.

Questioned on the presence of U.S. forces in the region, the Saudi Arabian envoy replied that American forces came to the region "as part of the international force, and after the liberation of Kuwait when there was no reason for their further stay, they have started pulling out."

He also denied that Riyadh has given special financial commitments to the U.S. for the liberation of Kuwait. "The expenses which should have been paid by Saudi Arabia are clear," he added, without elaborating.

On the Iran-Saudi cooperation in the 13 nation Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), Bakish thought that cooperation between the two countries would prove beneficial to OPEC as a whole.

He, however, declined to answer a question about the daily production of crude by Saudi Arabia, as well as its per barrel price, merely saying that his country abides by its OPEC quota.

Attempts To Reconcile GCC, Israel Condemned

NC1205193691 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1630 GMT 12 May 91

[Station commentary]

[Text] The United States, and Western countries in general, are seeking to create a suitable climate to promote the Middle East peace process by persuading the Arab countries to reconcile with Israel. They are also seeking to resolve this regional conflict in accordance with Western interests. U.S. efforts focus on ending the crisis and guaranteeing Israel's future and interests by making security proposals to the Arab countries in the Persian Gulf and encouraging them to make political concessions to Israel for the sake of convening a Middle East peace conference.

During his visits to the region after the war ended, U.S. Secretary of State James Baker has sought to persuade Arab leaders to reconcile with the Zionist entity. The U.S. secretary announced yesterday that the six member countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] are willing to participate as observers in a regional peace conference that will include the Zionist entity. Immediately after James Baker's statement, Israeli radio announced that Israel is willing to sign a nonaggression treaty with all Arab countries in the Middle East. It must

be noted here that the GCC countries' agreement to participate in a Middle East peace conference comes at a time when Tel Aviv believes it has evaded the objections and condemnations recently raised against it by the Arab countries. These objections and condemnations, which focus on the new wave of Zionist immigration and settlement in the occupied Palestinian territories and the Zionist entity's brutal repression of the Palestinian people in their occupied land, prove the entity's refusal to recognize any rights to the Palestinians in their occupied territories. This fact makes the success of the proposed conference hinge on Washington's and Tel Aviv's positions and decisions.

It is clear that the GCC countries are currently suffering a loss of political will as a result of the U.S. military assistance to them during the war. This regrettable phenomenon has resulted in the Arab countries' being pushed by the United States toward a conference that is not very different from the notorious Camp David conference.

The GCC countries' acceptance of these humiliating conditions will lead to a military and political imbalance in the Middle East in favor of Israel. The United States is currently busy putting the finishing touches on a new political tragedy that encroaches on the Palestinian people's rights. The United States is trying to give the impression that the Arab countries in this region stand behind these political changes. Nevertheless, it cannot be concealed that the United States is using the Gulf Arab countries as a political cover to achieve its objectives.

Political observers believe that Washington, exploiting its increasing influence in the GCC region, is trying to kill two birds with one stone by simultaneously resolving the issue of regional security and establishing peace in the Middle East. If the GCC wants to continue to go along with U.S. policy, there is no doubt that the results will only be more Arab and Muslim humiliation and subservience to the West and further Zionist arrogance toward Arabs and Muslims.

Commentary Views Egypt's Withdrawal From Gulf

LD1105121491 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1000 GMT 11 May 91

[Station commentary: "Return of Egyptian Troops From the Persian Gulf"]

[Text] Egypt's sudden decision to recall of the Egyptian paratroopers who participated in the operations to free Kuwait within the framework of the allied forces and the gradual withdrawal of that country's logistics forces from the Persian Gulf region have raised many questions.

Egyptian President Husni Mubarak announced late last week that the recall of all Egyptian forces, numbering around 35,000, will be completed within the coming three months.

Justifying their sudden decision to recall their forces from the Persian Gulf, Egyptian officials have said that their decision was made three months ago. They also insist that Egyptian units returned because their mission was completed. They said the decision was not made at the request of the host countries of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

A number of the region's political analysts believe that the return of the Egyptian forces from the Persian Gulf and the likelihood of the recall of Syrian forces in the near future are contradictory to the Damascus Declaration that was signed two months ago. Foreign ministers of six member-states of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council, together with the foreign ministers of Egypt and Syria, who took part in the eight-party conference in Damascus, had agreed that the Egyptian and Syrian military units stationed in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait should make up the principal nucleus of the joint Arab forces with the task of maintaining the security of the Arab oil-producing countries in the Persian Gulf.

The same analysts believe that the incompatability of Egypt's recent move with the decisions adopted at the Damascus meeting is related to the recent trip by U.S. Defense Secretary Dick Cheney to the region. They maintain that the United States' insistence on maintaining a direct naval presence in the Persian Gulf, together with Ground Forces bases, is the main reason for Egypt's recalling its forces. This is due to the fact that in the U.S. military strategy there is no place for the presence of Arab forces.

Other political analysts believe that Husni Mubarak's recent decision to recall Egyptian Army units from the region is based on the fact that Egypt is annoyed with the Kuwaiti Government's performance; that is, Cairo, which had utilized all of its political strength in the allied war with Iraq, was expecting to have a much larger share in the reconstruction of Kuwait. That was necessary for Cairo to counter the negative results of the return from abroad of Egypt's largest expatriot labor force in any country. These workers returned home from Iraq and Kuwait after the war broke out.

In its meeting last week, the foreign ministers of the six member-states of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council did not refer to the security plan approved at the Damascus meeting. A number of officials taking part in the meeting said that agreement on security measures needed further consultations, which could not materialize before next summer.

All of these developments demonstrate that the willingness to set up an Arab security system is weakening as the days pass. They also demonstrate that the slogans raised during the war on the need for Arab cooperation in security, economic, and political fields are waning.

With due regard to these facts, political circles make two projections for the region's future: First, the Arab states of the Persian Gulf would pay due attention to geopolitical realities, and as such would recognize that security

based on nationalistic considerations would be an inadequate system. They would then come to accept that geographic security is the only practical system to provide for the security of all the countries of the Persian Gulf region.

The second projection proposes that some of the Persian Gulf shaykhdoms would prefer Western support to Arab support, and thus they would decide to provide for their security by awarding bases to the Western forces.

Kuwaiti Notable Seeks Help in Refugees Return

LD1205174591 Tehran IRNA in English 1601 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] Tehran, May 12, IRNA—Prominent Kuwaiti Alim Hojjat ol-Eslam Muhammad Bakr Mohri [name as received] on Sunday requested the Islamic Republic to help Kuwaiti refugees in Iran to return home.

Hoj. Mohri in his meeting with deputy foreign minister for international affairs, Manuchehr Mottaki, also outlined the obstacles being put by the Kuwaiti Government in the way of homecoming citizens.

Mottaki said the Islamic Republic is for the voluntary return to Kuwait of all Kuwaiti refugees and of Iranian nationals who were residing in that emirate before Iraq's August 2 invasion.

Agreement To Cap Kuwaiti Oil Wells Signed

LD1305164891 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1430 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] Thanks to an agreement signed between the national oil companies of Iran and Kuwait, the task of capping Kuwaiti oil wells has been given to Iran. Iran's National Oil Company will soon start the practical work to cap the wells by dispatching a 50-man team. In this connection Petroleum Minister Aqazadeh told our reporters:

[Begin Aqazadeh recording] We have signed an agreement with the Kuwaiti national oil company. On the basis of this agreement a contract has been drawn up for the capping of the oil wells, and our team will soon start its work in Kuwait. A 50-man team will be dispatched to the Burqan region of Kuwait to begin capping wells in the area. Under this agreement, the Iranian national oil company is to have a free hand; that is, the company can go ahead with its activities and cap as many wells as possible within a six-month period. Of course, we did ask for permission to send more teams, but for the time being they have agreed to a 50-man team. If the work is successful, there will be the possibility of sending more teams.

Iran will supply all the equipment and machinery, but the Kuwaiti oil company will provide the water, drilling rigs, and other necessary on site equipment. We will submit a list of manpower, machinery, and services costs, based on existing international agreements, to the Kuwaitis, and they will reimburse us in accordance with the agreement signed.

We think that in view of this agreement, we shall begin our practical work in Kuwait as soon as possible. No doubt what we are doing in Kuwait alongside the highly efficient international companies will gain acceptance for Iran as one of those countries of the world that are globally famous. The fact that Iran will compete with such companies is a great honor for the oil company workers. We hope that what we do in Kuwait will pave the way for our other proposals in the fields of rebuilding their production units and carrier lines, and the full reconstruction of Kuwait's refinery.

In view of the fact that Kuwait has given top priority to capping the oil wells before starting discussions on the production units and reconstruction of the refineries, our performance in capping the wells could lead to more contracts in Kuwait. [end recording]

'Sandstorm and Greasy Clouds' Over Southwest

LD1105122791 Tehran IRNA in English 1028 GMT 11 May 91

[Text] Yasuj, Kohkiluyeh va Boyer Ahmadi Prov., May 11, IRNA—Sandstorm and greasy clouds caused by the burning oil wells in Kuwait have been hanging over Kohkiluyeh va Boyer Ahmadi Province, southwestern Iran, since Friday afternoon.

Due to heavy pollution residents have been advised to remain indoors until the air clears and keep doors and windows shut.

The pollution is worse in Dow Gonbadan, which is closer to the Persian Gulf region.

Meanwhile, several houses were destroyed as a result of landslide in Doab and La-Male Jokar villages of Boyer Ahmad.

Velayati Wants Iraqi Refugee Haven Clarified

LD1004163591 Tehran IRIB Television Network in English 1600 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Text] Foreign Minister Mr Velayati, in an exclusive interview with the BBC television network, said that the issue of the establishment of a safe haven in Iraq for the Iraqi refugees is not yet quite clear and there is need for further explanations.

Mr Velayati said: The most important problem at present is the huge influx of Iraqi refugees to Iran. He further called for more international aid to the Iraqi refugees in Iran.

Heat, Disease Threatens Refugees in Khuzestan

LD1105101791 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 11 May 91

[Text] As the hot season approaches in Khuzestan Province, the transfer of over 40,000 Muslim Iraq refugees from that province to cooler regions is vital.

According to the Central News Unit, the official in charge of refugee affairs in Khuzestan Province announced the above news and added: Currently over 40,000 of the 68,000 Iraqi refugees, who arrived in Khuzestan Province via the southern border crossings, are suffering under very harsh living conditions. Considering the extreme heat in Khuzestan Province, the need for cooling methods, and the danger of heat-related diseases, it is vital that preventative measures be taken. He added: The presence of the vast Hawr al-Huwayzah in the southern border regions, which is always full of disease-carrying insects, has put the health of the refugees in real danger.

Kurdish Leaders Denounced for Talks in Baghdad

NC1305110391 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 27 Apr 91 pp 1, 10

[Commentary: "Baghdad's Efforts To Crumble the Rebels' Front"]

[Text] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. In a cunning move, the Baghdad regime has enticed some Iraqi Kurdish leaders to go to Baghdad to negotiate. The autonomy of Iraqi Kurdistan is to be the main point of these agreements.

Regardless of how the negotiations turn out and the questionable value of an agreement with Saddam's signature, one question remains: Why have some Kurdish leaders allowed themselves to become allies with Saddam in Baghdad's effort to destroy the opposition?

Baghdad wants to destroy the opposition in every possible way. This is why initially and in the "military phase" it resorted to all types of crimes to defeat the military opposition to Saddam's regime. It is also why the regime now is attempting to create disagreement and discord in the opposition front in the current "political phase." The Iraqi Kurds, who feel the impact of Saddam's crimes in their daily life, will not forgive the actions being taken by some Kurdish leaders against them and against the entire Iraqi nation.

The Kurdish people will not forget Saddam's crimes, massacres, or the hypocritical overtures to which the Baghdad regime resorted in order to emerge the victor in the recent bloody unrest.

How can they forget Irbil's fall after its conquest by the people? In that incident, one of Saddam's cabinet ministers and 8,000 Republican Guards pretended that they had broken with the Baghdad regime and joined the people. The people of Irbil welcomed and embraced them, they shed tears of happiness and displayed their tender feelings. Then this group suddenly opened fire with their machine guns and devastated the Irbil popular unrest from within.

This was one "military trick" Saddam used against the Iraqi Kurds. The feeling today is that he is carrying out a "political trick" in almost the same way in order to create a rift in the common Iraqi people's enmity against the Baghdad regime.

It is obvious that a great number of people will contest the agreement, a small number who seek to benefit by collaborating with Saddam will welcome it, and a great number will not know what to think about it.

Saddam's main objective in these negotiations—the creation of a schism in the opposition—is ensured through this dirty political trick regardless of how many people favor or oppose the final agreement.

Saddam and his advisers are hoping to make the political groups and the Iraqi people believe that it is possible to negotiate with Saddam. Those who take the first step will benefit the most.

But the main question is: Who truly benefits from this occurrence? Saddam, who has resorted to this trick to guarantee his existence, is the only winner in this dirty political game. In his opinion, such commitments, even ones more important than these, do not damage the regime. In other words, if Saddam stays in power, he knows very well how to break his word; if he does not stay in power he will be creating a huge problem for the future government by agreeing to something that cannot be delivered. Thus Saddam has already taken his revenge on the future government.

It would be nice if the group of Kurdish leaders who went to Baghdad to collaborate with Saddam would say if Saddam has any respect for the Kurdish people. These commitments come from a man who made more than two million Kurds homeless. Those that remain only stay because they have not had the opportunity to extricate themselves. We need to ask what has changed in recent months. How has Saddam shown his good side to the Kurdish leaders?

The only difference in Saddam's actions is that he is no longer massacring the Kurdish people; he is now making them homeless. The Kurdish people did not die so their leaders would walk over their bodies, trample their blood, and smile at Saddam. The Kurdish people have not accepted the difficult and intolerable conditions of homelessness for their leaders to conspire with Saddam.

The next question is: Which of his commitments has Saddam kept that would lead anyone to believe that he will keep new ones? Saddam has stabbed his allies in the back. The Saudi Arabian and Kuwaiti incidents are a lesson for those who are tempted to cooperate with Saddam. It would be good if those who are cooperating

with Saddam today to break the opposition would learn a lesson from the fate of Saddam's other bold collaborators. At any rate, political groups may resort to acts that benefit them, not the people. This means that the agreement is not the Iraqi Kurdish people's choice.

Some facts prove that the West's political pressures have been instrumental in the cooperation between Saddam and the Kurds. This is nothing new for the West. They did everything they could to help Saddam succeed and gave the green light for his military operations. Now there is no reason to doubt that Saddam will score politically and break the opposition front.

Saddam's stance is clear. He is a "war criminal" who wants to ensure his existence even if Iraq is destroyed and a generation is massacred. We ask why those who portrayed themselves as the leaders of the opposition in northern Iraq yesterday are acting as Saddam's collaborators today. This is the dirtiest possible way to gain political progress. They have stabbed the Iraqi people in the back. This is the most despicable way to gain political points. In fact, the nation views these turn of events as a "plot."

It is possible that those doing this believe that because Saddam is in a weak and helpless position, this is the best possible time to negotiate with him for political gains. These people say that if we do not negotiate now, we will never be in a better position.

The answer to this is completely clear. First of all, nothing Saddam has promised them is stable or credible and can be rescinded at any time. To put it more clearly, these promises will never be kept.

Secondly, this shameful deal is being transacted over the blood of the Iraqi people and the oppressed Kurds. The opportunists are the only ones tempted to deal on the nations' blood and are ready to trample everything.

It would be very audacious of someone to ask for Saddam's death, to help unite the people to overthrow the Baghdad regime, or to pretend to be a leader one day and the next day trample on everything and go running to Baghdad.

Saddam does not care about the agreement's contents. He only wants to spread discord in the opposition. It is sad that some in the opposition have taken the first step in helping Saddam achieve this end.

Editorial Condemns Saddam's Massacre of Shiites

NC1005151191 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 1 May 91 p 2

[Editorial: "Saddam's Crimes Can Not Be Covered Up"]

[Text] A correspondent from the English weekly periodical "OBSERVER" reports from Iraq that Saddam, while haranguing on his decision to grant autonomy to the Kurdish minority, rends the heart of the Iraqi Shi'ite majority. The correspondent further reports that many Shi'ite clerics have been either arrested or put to death. Over 5,000 clerics have been detained only in the religious city of al-Najaf, and broadcast of the summons to prayer (azan) has been prohibited.

Actually the report brings to light only a small portion of the crimes Saddam has committed against his own nation in the past two months.

After the occupation of Kuwait on August 2, Saddam tried to counter Western propaganda by posing as a devout Muslim who had embarked on a new crusade against the "infidels". And unfortunately this propaganda gambit was readily accepted by gullible people in some Muslim countries. In particular, in some North African countries demonstrations were organized in support of Saddam by people who lacked adequate understanding of Saddam's character and his dark past, and were impressed mainly by Saddam's hostility towards the West. Saddam's true nature, however, was revealed after his disastrous defeat in Kuwait when people in Iraq rose in revolt against the unprincipled ruler in Iraq.

Most people, who had previously tried to make a hero out of a ruthless, wild man, came to realize their mistake. But there are still other, misled or misleading, people in North Africa—notably in Algeria—who try to justify Saddam's recent crimes.

It is a great mistake to foment discontent among the various Islamic groups, and to attack one sect in apparent defense of other sects specially with the political motive of supporting a criminal. The destruction and sacrilege of the shrine of Imam 'Ali (AS) [allahu salaam—peace be upon him] in al-Najaf is certainly an affront to the Shi'ites. There is not a single sect in Islam which would condone such a sacrilege. Imam 'Ali (AS) is equally respected by all Muslim groups including the Shi'ites and the Sunni sects.

The Muslim groups in Algeria could ask their embassy in Iraq to provide them with indisputable evidences of the atrocities committed by the agents of Saddam against the shrine of Imam 'Ali (AS).

Cyprus' Release of Israeli 'Spies' Condemned

NC1205104991 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 6 May 91 p 13

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] A Cypriot court released four Israeli spies on bail. They were charged with attempting to plant listening devices on the telephone lines of the Islamic Republic of Iran's Embassy.

The court convened under stringent security, with scores of Iranian and Arab residents in Cyprus, including diplomats, present. The judge ordered the Israelis' temporary release after each posted $6,500 bail. These spies, two men and two women, were arrested on 12 April while attempting to plant listening and surveillance

devices in the Islamic Republic of Iran's Embassy in Nicosia. They were in jail until last Thursday [2 May].

The Government of Cyprus has released them despite evidence of their crime of espionage: They were in possession of listening and spying devices. In any case, the dossier on this espionage will not close here. Zionist espionage and attempts to gain information about the diplomatic activities of the Islamic Republic of Iran are the best evidence that the Zionists consider Islamic Iran the real danger to themselves.

This is just one example of Zionist spying on the Islamic Republic of Iran that has been discovered and brought to light. It would be only realistic to assume that they are involved in similar activities against Iran in other parts of the world.

It is not known how responsibly the Government of Cyprus has acted in this regard and to what extent it has been realistic about activities that totally violate all of Cyprus' internal security laws.

With the release of four Israeli spies in Cyprus in lieu of [as published] a fine, the question arises: Does not such collusion allow greater and more extensive acts of espionage by the Zionists in the small divided country of Cyprus? Has not the reputation of Cyprus' judicial system in Nicosia been bartered for dollars? These are questions that Cyprus' judicial system has still not answered.

Facts and figures indicate that this issue is far more complicated than the mere planting of bugs. It appears that the Cypriot judicial authorities' three-week delay in trying the criminals and their subsequent unexpected acquittal [as published] smacks of an organized plot far more extensive than an act of mere espionage against the Islamic Republic of Iran. It is essential for the Government of Cyprus and its judicial system to follow up on this vigorously.

The officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the formulators of its foreign policy should realize that Israel considers Iran its real enemy. The Zionists' conduct and actions regarding the Islamic Republic of Iran have affirmed this more than anything else. The activities and plots by such a regime, whether at the regional or international level, should be studied intensively to find out if similar espionage activity exists in all Iranian embassies and diplomatic representations. In addition, the employees in all centers should exercise greater vigilance to combat all such incidents.

In any case, necessity demands that the Iranian Government should seriously follow up this incident, which has been clearly confirmed, to ensure that none of the rights of the Islamic Republic of Iran has been jeopardized.

Editorial Rejects Establishing Ties With U.S.

NC1205135891 Tehran ABRAR in Persian 2 May 91 p 1

[Editorial: "Tilt Toward the West—Propaganda Stemming From Frustration or Hostility"]

[Excerpts] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. "Our people have as clear an understanding of political, cultural, and revolutionary concepts as they do of the most basic concerns of their daily lives."

This statement by the great leader of the Islamic revolution at a meeting with workers and teachers reveals the development of the Iranian nation, which is a blessed legacy of the Islamic revolution. Despite this firm foundation and great faith, Western propaganda occasionally surfaces through remarks such as "the Iranian Government is leaning toward the West." [passage omitted]

The United States, which wants to establish relations with Iran, does not hesitate to seize every opportunity to portray Iran's efforts to play an active role in international organizations or to forge relations with other countries as a precursor to its establishment of ties with the United States.

The most unfortunate aspect of this is that such propaganda influences certain circles in such a way that it lends credence to Western propaganda. In this way, questions arise about the Islamic Republic of Iran's foreign policy and the expansion of its relations with other countries to promote its national and international interests.

The United States is pursuing a clear and well-known objective when, whether as a result of disappointment and frustration or of animosity, it raises the issue of improving relations with Iran. At such a sensitive time in the region, does it benefit our national interests, the prestige of the revolution, and our people for such propaganda to be bandied about?

Fortunately, the people have acquired the necessary acumen and awareness through the blessings of the revolution and, guided by the resistance of the past years, they can understand that the propaganda by the United States and other circles is aimed at undermining our system's officials.

Commentary Claims U.S. Supports Terrorism

NC1305211691 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 4 May 91 p 2

[First in series of unattributed commentaries: "Who Is Sponsoring Terrorism?"]

[Excerpts] In its annual report to Congress, the U.S. State Department once again said that Syria, Cuba, Iraq, Libya, North Korea, and Iran were sponsors of terrorism and so should remain the targets of economic sanctions.

The issue of state-sponsored terrorism is a old and tattered file which the State Department digs out every year when it reviews its so-called blacklist in light of these countries' attitude toward the Washington administration. The list is then presented to Congress. [passage omitted]

Iran has been the target of the White House's wrath ever since the victory of the Islamic revolution and the downfall of the tyrannical monarchical regime, and it has been on its blacklist for many years. Because it refuses to do anything to regain the favor of the United States, Islamic Iran remains the focus of Washington's fury.

Volumes could be written about why the United States labels its opponents terrorists. The label of terrorism, which implies random and inhuman acts of violence, is one of the pretexts to which the United States resorts both to cover up its own crimes and to crush any governments opposed to it. The United States applies this label whenever it sees its interests being threatened. [passage omitted]

Even if we disregard all the other crimes committed by the United States and consider only its behavior on the Palestinian issue, it becomes clear that the United States is the mother of world terrorism, as most of the evils of terrorism in the contemporary world are rooted in occupied Palestine.

The Zionists have been killing, wounding, imprisoning, and abducting people in occupied Palestine regularly for many years now, but the White House has never applied the label of terrorists to the Zionists. Houses have been razed to the ground with people inside and thousands of Palestinian youths have been wounded or martyred, but instead of condemning the Zionist regime as terrorist, the United States heaps praise and aid on it. [passage omitted]

When the aggressive U.S. forces downed an Iranian passenger plane, killing its 330 passengers, the White House bestowed a medal on the criminal commander of the Vincennes, and neither the powers of world arrogance nor the people of the United States showed any anger toward the U.S. Administration. Was not the murder of more than 300 innocent civilians, some of them children, an act of terrorism? Do the actions of the terrorist monafeqin [hypocrites—Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization], which enjoys the direct support of the United States even within Iran, not come under the category of terrorism? Is it Islamic Iran that is a sponsor of terrorism, when it has sheltered over 1 million Iraqi refugees, or is it the United States, which gave Saddam a green light to kill hundreds of thousands of people?

If this is the White House's definition of terrorism, then it can be said that Islamic Iran has suffered thousands more casualties than the United States from such acts of terrorism as well as from the acts of terrorism its has sponsored. It can be said with great certainty that the Islamic Republic of Iran is the country that has suffered the greatest number of casualties from acts of terrorism.

In any event, the United States, with its policy of arrogance, believes that Islamic Iran sponsors terrorism and wants to use this as a pretext to maintain its longstanding policy of hostility toward the revolution. This is in itself a point of strength for the revolution and a tribute to its soundness and firmness when viewed against the backdrop of U.S. hostility. When the United States speaks in praise of Iran, it will be the time to doubt our position and stances. It is only logical for the United States, the enemy of mankind, to display opposition and animosity toward the Islamic revolution. [passage omitted]

European Stance on Ties, Hostages Assailed

NC1105055491 Tehran SALAM in Persian 25 Apr 91 p 12

[Vahidi commentary entitled: "The Europeans' Limit?!"]

[Text] There is no doubt that our country needs foreign technical and technological know-how during the reconstruction era right now. There is no doubt that in meeting such needs it is necessary to maintain the country's political independence and not to give in to the desires of any foreign government. Undoubtedly, some West European countries have the best resources for some of our needs. Even taking that into account, it was extremely disappointing to see how quickly—after all the high-level shuttlings and discussions on agreements and on political and economic cooperation—the EEC foreign ministers sat down and decided that the expansion of these relations woul be contingent on the release of the Western hostages in Lebanon. The view that America is the only country that benefits from Iran and the EEC's not expanding their contacts is correct and has many supporters in Iran. This view has also been used, however, as a pretext to mend relations with America's EEC contacts. In the past, we favored relations with Europe over relations with America, because the former did not attach political strings to their materials and technology. If however, the Europeans now want to resort to political blackmail and impose conditions on their relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran, what will be the difference between them and the Americans?

Now that America can put into practice its goodwill toward Iran by using European countries to get closer to Iran, the limits of Europe's actions should also be clearly explained. Is this Europe similar to the one we saw after his eminence the imam, may his soul be sanctified, issued his decree on the blasphemous Salman Rushdie? At that time, none of Britain's empty threats were heeded. Gradually, one diplomat after another came to Iran and the embassy was reopened. Or do we have a Europe which conditions the expansion of its relations with Iran on the release of the hostages in Lebanon? Our foreign minister did not express any dissatisfaction with Europe's impudent position. In fact, he left to visit three EEC member countries.

The truth is that the national and economic interests of the European countries that has made us dependent on them has also made them dependent on us. We can have relations based on mutual respect and equality if they react suitably to our actions. If this does not happen, what is the difference between the Americans and the Europeans? We will encourage the Americans to treat us like the Europeans have, if they want relations to improve! It is hoped that the EEC will not give in to American pressure and lose the current historic opportunity it has been granted to make up for its past relations with Iran.

Cabinet Views Merge of Law Enforcement Forces

NC1305083691 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0330 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] During yesterday's cabinet session, the commanders of the state law enforcement forces submitted a report on the various phases of implementing the law on merging the law enforcement forces and on the formation of a common law enforcement force.

During this session, Interior Minister Nuri briefed the cabinet on the problems and shortcomings of the former organization and on the problems of coordination and law enforcement in various parts of the country. He also described the objectives, policies, programs, and organization envisaged for the law enforcement force.

In this briefing, some of the special organizational characteristics of the law enforcement force, the reduction of forces in the headquarters, the expansion of security coverage, and accelerated coordination and command were also listed.

Thanking the interior minister and his colleagues on all levels for planning and facilitating the law on merging the law enforcement forces, President Hashemi-Rafsanjani expressed his and the cabinet's support for the implementation of the law enforcement force's programs and the formation of this force. The president described the first step taken in establishing this force as extremely significant and valuable and expressed the hope that the commanders and officials of the law enforcement forces will successfuly carry out this force's affairs under the direction of the commander in chief.

Nepal & Bhutan

Nepal

Bhattarai Resigns After Losing Parliament Seat

BK1405023091 Hong Kong AFP in English 0227 GMT 14 May 91

[Text] Kathmandu, May 14 (AFP)—Nepal's interim Prime Minister Krishna Prasad Bhattarai resigned Tuesday following his general election defeat, official sources said.

Mr. Bhattarai, the president of the Nepali Congress, lost Sunday's election contest in Kathmandu's number one constituency by 700 votes to the general secretary of United Marxist-Leninist faction of the Nepal Communist Party (NCP-UML), Madan Bhandari, an election commission source said.

King Accepts Resignation

BK1405080091 Hong Kong AFP in English 0754 GMT 14 May 91

[Text] Kathmandu May 14 (AFP)—King Birendra of Nepal accepted Tuesday the resignation tendered earlier in the day by Prime Minister Krishna Prasad Bhattarai, the state radio said.

The radio quoting a palace communique said the king had asked Mr. Bhattarai to carry on with the present interim coalition government until a new government could be constituted.

Mr. Bhattarai, 66, president of the Nepali Congress, resigned Tuesday after being beaten in Sunday's parliamentary elections by the general secretary of the Nepal Communist Party (United Marxist-Leninist), Madhan Bandhari, by a slim margin of 743 votes in Kathmandu. Counting was still going on and the final result was uncertain Tuesday.

Nepali Congress in Lead; UML Gains 26 Seats

BK1405090991 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 14 May 91

[Text] In the parliamentary elections in Nepal, the ruling Nepali Congress is maintaining its lead over other parties. Of the 54 results declared so far, the Nepali Congress has secured 26 seats. The Nepali Communist Party—United Marxist-Leninist [UML]—has bagged 23 seats, and the Nepal Sadbhavana Party two seats. While one seat has gone to an independent, Nepal Workers and Peasants Party and the Nepali Democratic Party-Chand has got one seat each.

The Nepalese prime minister, Mr. Krishna Prasad Bhattarai, has resigned, following his defeat. He submitted his resignation to the king this morning. Mr. Bhattarai has been asked to continue till the new democratically-elected government takes office. Mr. Bhattarai, who is also the acting president of the Nepali Congress, lost to Mr. Madan Bhandari of the Nepali Communist Party, UML, by a slender margin of 751 votes.

Our Kathmandu correspondent reports that among important winners are two ministers in the interim government, Mr. Mahendra Narayana Nidhi and Mr. Sahana Pradhan, and the president of the Nepali Communist Party, UML, Mr. Manmohan Adhikhari. The general secretary of the Nepali Congress, Mr. Girija Prasad Koirala, who is contesting from two places is leading at Sunsari but trailing at Morang.

Meanwhile, repoll is taking place today at most of the 42 centers where had been suspended on Sunday, following incidents of clashes, snatching of ballot boxes, and other poll-related disputes.

Pakistan

Further on Leaders' Statements on Kashmir Issue

Sharif Urges Kuwait-Type Solution

BK1305162891 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has called upon the international community to help resolve the Kashmir issue on the basis of the principles that motivated it in taking action against forcible occupation of Kuwait. He made this statement while addressing the working committee members of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference in Rawalpindi today. Expressing grief and anguish over the brutalities being committed against innocent Kashmiris, the prime minister demanded full implementation of the relevant UN resolutions on Kashmir granting the right of self-determination to the people of Jammu and Kashmir. He called on the freedom-loving people of the world to impress upon India the need for a peaceful settlement, which will not only guarantee peace in the region but also contribute to the prosperity of India and Pakistan.

The central executive committee of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference condemned the Indian repression in occupied Kashmir. At its meeting in Islamabad today, the committee adopted a resolution denouncing India's shelling of border villages of Azad Kashmir; many innocent civilians have been killed. The resolution says the so-called largest democracy in the world finds itself fully exposed by grossly violating human rights in occupied Kashmir. It further adds that India has expelled newspersons from the occupied valley to keep its crimes from being revealed to the world.

Government Rejects Delhi Charge

BK1205052891 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] Pakistan has strongly rejected India's charge that Pakistan is sending infiltrators into occupied Kashmir. A Foreign Office spokesman in Islamabad has expressed surprise over the tone and text of this statement. The newspapers have attributed the statement to Indian Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar, whereby Pakistan was warned against meddling in Kashmir and would have to pay a heavy price for sending saboteurs into occupied Kashmir.

The spokesman said that the people of Jammu and Kashmir are continuing their struggle for the fundamental right of self-determination, and the Indian prime minister is trying to prove that Pakistan is guilty in this regard. The spokesman said it is probably true that the Indian security forces rounded up innocent and unarmed Kashmiris in the occupied valley, forcibly transported them to positions close to the line of control, and slaughtered them mercilessly, claiming that these people were sent from the line of control to show Pakistan's involvement.

The aim of this inhuman and unjust trick is simply to divert the world's attention from the Kashmiri people's struggle against India's continuous occupation of occupied Kashmir. The spokesman expressed the hope that India's leaders would refrain from leveling false charges against Pakistan which could only further increase tension between the two countries.

The spokesman recalled that more than a year ago Pakistan offered India a proposal for setting up a neutral body to monitor the line of control and investigate complaints of infiltration, but India rejected the proposal. If India believes in the continued charges against Pakistan, then it should accept the Pakistani proposal.

Sharif: India 'Losing Control'

BK1205115291 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1100 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] The prime minister, Mr. Nawaz Sharif, has emphasized the need for an early solution of the Kashmir problem to ensure peace and security in the region. Talking to newsmen in Karachi today, he said India is losing control over the situation in occupied Kashmir and unless immediate steps are taken to solve the problem, the situation would become more serious. He said the issue is not only causing concern to Pakistan, but to the entire world as innocent Kashmiri Muslims are being subjected to the worst repression.

Earlier, the prime minister awarded licenses to shipping companies and [word indistinct] operators. Speaking on the occasion, he called upon the private sector to accept the plan of privatization and fulfill national aspirations in achieving self-reliance.

Sharif Urges Self-Determination

BK1205153591 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] The prime minister has urged India to settle the Kashmir issue in accordance with the wishes of the people of Jammu and Kashmir for peace and stability in the region. Talking to newsmen in Karachi today, Nawaz Sharif said the present situation in occupied Kashmir is not only causing concern to Pakistan but to the entire world. Therefore, India should consider the issue seriously, he added.

The prime minister said the Kashmir issue remains to be resolved and its only solution is for Kashmiris to have the opportunity to exercise their right to self-determination according to UN resolutions. The Kashmiris have made it clear that they could not be subjugated for long.

He added that Pakistan desires cordial, friendly, and peaceful relations with India, but the Kashmir dispute remains an obstacle in the path of bilateral ties.

Farooq Haider Warns of War

BK1005162391 Hong Kong AFP in English 1341 GMT 10 May 91

[Text] Rawalpindi, Pakistan, May 10 (AFP)—An influential Kashmiri leader Friday warned that the "unbridled Indian atrocities" in the northern Himalayan state might trigger an Indo-Pakistan confrontation.

"The situation in occupied Kashmir is getting out of the Indian control and the continued massacre of Kashmiris is fraught with danger of an India-Pakistan conflict," Dr. Farooq Haider told a news conference here. Dr. Haider heads a faction of the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), one of several groups spearheading an independence movement in the Indian held Kashmir. The campaign has claimed more than 2,000 lives since last year.

Accusing agents of the Indian secret service, the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), for Wednesday's bomb blast at his Rawalpindi clinic, Dr. Haider rejected speculation that it was the work of the rival JKLF faction led by Amanullah Khan. "No Kashmiri would commit such a heinous crime against a fellow Kashmiri," he said. The blast destroyed the three-storey building, leaving 10 people dead and 29 injured, mostly patients. Dr. Farooq was not in the clinic at the time because he was ill. "There is no doubt that the Research and Analysis Wing agents wanted to kill me," he said.

Dr. Haider split with Mr. Khan after the latter announced the formation of a provisional government in exile "without consulting the party high command."

Blaming New Delhi for sowing seeds of dissension among the "freedom fighters," he said "I have no other dispute with Mr. Amanullah Khan." Even on the dormant issue of a provisional government, talks were continuing between the two groups, he added. Mr. Khan has also condemned the bomb attack, blaming it on Indian agents.

Tension between Pakistan and India has mounted again recently over Kashmir, the cause of two of their three wars since their 1947 independence from British colonial rule.

Dr. Haider's warning of a fourth war followed Thursday's strong protest from Islamabad that India had been shelling villages on the Pakistani-administered part of the divided state.

As an official spokesman here condemned "human rights violations" on the Indian side, Army Chief General Mirza Aslam Beg said his forces were "fully capable of defeating aggression posed to the country."

Condemning the Indian Army's "brutal suppression" of the separatist movement, Dr. Haider said Kashmir should be handed over to the United Nations for a certain period. Without elaborating he said such U.N. intervention will prevent the possibility of a conflict. This would help the Kashmiris to decide their future without the presence of an outside force, he added.

'Heavily Armed Men' Kidnap 3 Chinese Engineers

BK1305012091 Karachi DAWN in English 12 May 91 p 1

[By M.B. Kalhoro]

[Text] Larkana, May 11—Six heavily armed men kidnapped three Chinese engineers from the Talti village of Dadu District.

The engineers—Lee Chao, Zhu Tai and Tai Ching—were among a team of consultants working in collaboration with WAPDA [Water and Power Development Authority] on the laying of a 500 kv transmission line between Jamshoro and Peshawar. They were on their way to inspect the progress of the work in Dadu district when the six highwaymen blocked the road and kidnapped them. Mr Lee is Deputy Project Director and Mr Zhu and Mr Tai are both engineers. They were driven in their jeep off the main road, and across an uninhabited patch towards the forests. The kidnapping took place at 9.30 a.m.

The kidnappers left the jeep and the driver some 20 kilometres from Dadu city.

The SP's [Superintendent of Police] Office in Dadu confirmed the kidnapping and said the Commissioner and the DIG [Deputy Inspector General] of Hyderabad Range had gone into the forests with a heavy contingent of law enforcement agencies.

According to reports received from other sources, the engineers belonging to the Chinese Mechanical and Electrical Company, were kidnapped from Bhan Saeedabad in Schwan sub-division and that the kidnappers had arrived in a boat.

Other reports said six Chinese had been kidnapped but three of them were let off a little later. There was no official confirmation of these reports, nor could the names of the "freed" Chinese be learnt.

PPA [PAKISTAN PRESS AGENCY] adds: A joint police-Rangers operation was mounted as soon as report of the kidnapping reached the Bhan Saeedabad Police Station. Informed sources in Dadu said a heavy exchange of fire continued between the law enforcement agencies and the kidnappers till late in the night.

The sources also said the kidnappers had made no ransom demand but had communicated a warning to all Chinese working in Sindh to leave the province. The warning was passed on through the three "freed" Chinese, the sources added.

There are 14 Chinese working on the power project.

Engineers' Release Sought

BK1305013091 Karachi DAWN in English 12 May 91 p 1

[Text] Islamabad, May 11—Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has directed the Chief Minister of Sindh to recover the three Chinese engineers within 24 hours.

According to official sources, President Ghulam Ishaq Khan and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif were informed about the incident by the provincial authorities.

Sources said that the Prime Minister, who is leaving for Karachi on Sunday to receive Turkish President Turgut Ozal, would discuss the issue with the Chief Minister.

Foreign Office officials expressed serious concern over the kidnapping. They are said to be in constant touch with the Interior Ministry.

Turkey's Ozal Makes Brief Stopover in Karachi

BK1205163291 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1600 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] The Turkish president, Mr Turgut Ozal, arrived in Karachi this evening from Australia on his way back home. The Turkish president was warmly greeted by the Sindh governor, Mr. Mahmood A. Haroon, at the airport.

Holds Talks With Sindh Governor

BK1305053991 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] Turkish President Turgut Ozal has stressed need for further increasing bilateral economic and technical cooperation between Pakistan and Turkey.

During his short stay in Karachi last evening, he held talks with Sindh Governor Mahmood A. Haroon and expressed satisfaction over the existing useful mutual cooperation in different fields. He stressed the need for making the Organization of Economic Cooperation more effective so that Pakistan, Iran, and Turkey can achieve joint goals. He praised the present government's courageous economic policies and reforms started in Pakistan.

In their talks, both the leaders expressed identical views on the violation of human rights in occupied Kashmir, the Afghan problem, and the Gulf situation. The secretary general of foreign affairs and the Turkish foreign minister also took part in the talks.

The Sindh governor welcomed President Turgut Ozal and members of his delegation at the Quad-i-Azam International Airport and saw them off.

Turkish Prime Minister Visits En Route to ROK

BK1305150091 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1400 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] Turkish Prime Minister Yildirim Akbulut made a brief stopover at Karachi en route to Republic of Korea today. Sindh Chief Minister Jam Sadiq Ali received the Turkish premier at the airport and later saw him off.

Iranian, Turk Arrested for Smuggling Heroin

BK1305004491 Hong Kong AFP in English 1852 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] Quetta, Pakistan, May 12 (AFP)—Pakistan Narcotics Control Board [PNCB] officials have arrested an Iranian national and his Turkish companion for allegedly trying to smuggle heroin to the United States, a PNCB official said here Sunday.

The official said customs officials in Karachi recovered one kilogram (2.2 pounds) of heroin hidden in a parcel addressed to a person in the state of California and made the arrests here Saturday [11 May].

British Labor Party Leader Meets Akram Zaki

BK1405055491 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 14 May 91

[Text] Roy Hattersley, deputy leader of the British opposition Labor Party, called on Akram Zaki, secretary general of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in Islamabad yesterday. Akram Zaki apprised Hattersley of the situation in occupied Kashmir. He told the British Parliament member about India's increasingly unjust actions in occupied Kashmir. The secretary general emphasized that it is up to the international community to use its influence to ensure the protection of human rights and fundamental freedom, including the right of self-determination, in occupied Kashmir according to UN Security Council resolutions. Hattersley expressed regret over the open violations of human rights in occupied Kashmir. He also expressed his regret that the International Committee of the Red Cross and Amnesty International were not permitted to visit occupied Kashmir to assess the situation.

Akram Zaki informed Hattersley of the latest situation in Afghanistan and said Pakistan's policy is to have a political settlement that will end the bloodshed immediately, restore peace, and return thousands of Afghan refugees to a country with a deep-rooted government acceptable to the Afghan people.

The secretary general said that Pakistan, without supporting any individual, will make great efforts to improve cooperation and consensus among different Afghan groups and will fully support the UN secretary general's efforts to find a political solution to the problem in accordance with the desires of the Afghan people.

Measures To Safeguard Nuclear Installations

BK1105161491 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 11 May 91

[Excerpt] The government has taken all possible measures to protect the country's nuclear installations from any attack. This assurance was given by Chaudhary Amir

Hussain, the minister of state for law and parliamentary affairs, while speaking at an adjournment motion in the Senate today. The motion was sought to be moved by Professor Khurshid Ahmad. The minister of state said the government is fully aware of the situation. After the minister's statement, the mover did not press his motion. [passage omitted]

Reportage, Comment on Discussion of Islamic Law

Assembly Committee Divided

BK1205002691 Hong Kong AFP in English 1728 GMT 11 May 91

[Text] Islamabad, May 11 (AFP)—Pakistan's National Assembly received a report Saturday from a house select committee showing a lack of unanimity on an official bill to enforce Islamic shariah law.

Three out of the eight members of the committee which examined the bill for a month strongly opposed the legislation, according to the report presented by Minister of State for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Chaudhry Amir Hussain. The minister told the house that the committee approved, with a majority vote, an amended bill and recommended its passage by the assembly. The original bill was introduced on April 11.

The dissenters were Maulana Mohammad Khan Sheerani, a leader of the fundamentalist Jamiat 'Ulema Islam Party, Arbab Mohammad Jahangir Khan of the Awami National Party, which is an ally of the government, and M. Altaf Hussain of Peoples Democratic Alliance (PDA) led by former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto.

Mr. Sheerani described the bill as a "joke with shariah" in his note of dissent, while Mr. Khan said it failed to provide protection to the existing parliamentary political system. Mr. Hussain, in his lengthy note, argued that the bill was "absolutely unnecessary" in view of the Islamic provisions already contained in the country's constitution.

National Assembly Speaker Gohar Ayub Khan, emphasizing that the bill was of national importance, said a consensus was necesssary. He allowed two days for members to study the bill after which a debate will start. "Please do not try to bulldoze it," the speaker observed in an apparent reference to the law minister's insistence on beginning debate immediately. "We do not want the nation to be divided on this vital issue," he added.

Parties Air Differences

BK1305022091 Karachi DAWN in English 12 May 91 p 1

[Text] Islamabad, May 11—The IJI [Islamic Democratic Alliance] Government on Saturday presented the amended Shariah Bill in the National Assembly, but the Opposition PDA [People's Democratic Alliance], JUI [Jamiat-i-Ulema-i-Islam] (F) and ANP [Awami National Party] gave their notes of dissent rejecting the bill in toto.

The 193-page PDA note of dissent asserted that the Bill was "absolutely unnecessary" and should be withdrawn; the JUI called it "a joke with the Shariah" and the ANP said "it does not provide protection to the present political system and the existing democratic institutions".

As Law Minister Chaudhry Amir Hussain moved the Shariah Bill in the House, he tried to push through suspension of all rules so that it could be discussed immediately.

But after a short but inspired debate, Speaker Gohar Ayub Khan ruled that the House be given a two-day time so that members could study the Bill and form their opinion.

Another move by the Law Minister to suspend the question hour and adjournment motions was, however, carried by the House with a voice vote.

The Bill, in its amended form, says "the Shariah that is to say, the injunctions of Islam as laid down in the Holy Koran and Sunnah, shall be the supreme law of Pakistan."

On the controversial question of abolishing interest from the economic system, the new bill provides for a commission which would "oversee the process of the elimination of riba [interest] from every sphere of the economic activity in the shortest possible time."

The original bill, which went to the select committee, had specified a period of three years for elimination of riba but the new bill has omitted this time limit.

International commitments and financial obligations between the government, public or private sector company and any foreign individual or a company or a government etc would be honoured and remain valid "until an alternative economic system is evolved."

The PDA, in its objections to the bill, has maintained that it was violative of fundamental rights, women would lose their right of vote, Family Laws would stand abrogated, no person would escape Zakat [annual tax for charity], the Council of Islamic Ideology would be totally bypassed, no woman would be allowed to work, women without Purdah would not be allowed to come out of their houses. Besides, there were a number of religious complications, it said.

The JUI (F) in its note of dissent, said the purpose of the new Bill was to give the "interest-based economy an unspecified period of life." It demanded that either the Shariah Bill passed by the Senate be adopted or the report of Maulana Abdus Sattar Khan Niazi should be passed. The present Bill, it said, was a waste of time and a joke with Shariah.

The shortest dissent note was filed by the ANP, and its representative on the select committee, Arbab Jehangir Khan, stated: "I do not recommend the bill in its present form as it does not provide protection to the present political system and the existing democratic institutions."

Speaking in the Assembly on the move to suspend the rules so that discussion could begin immediately, PDA's Sardar Farooq Khan Leghari said it was difficult to understand why the Government was in such "an indecent haste" to get the bill passed.

Chaudhry Altaf Hussain of Jhelum said the bill would shake the very foundations of the nation and would turn the course of country's history and must be discussed in extreme detail.

Opposition sources said about 200 amendments were to be moved in the bill including some to refer the bill to the nation to elicit public opinion within thee months.

ANP's Arbab Jehangir Khan told newsmen in the cafeteria the Government was defeated in the select committee voting on the bill and the report of the select committee contained factual mistaken as it claimed that the bill had been passed with a majority vote.

IJI Endorses Bill

BK1305102691 Islamabad Overseas Service in English 0800 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] The National Assembly today began consideration of the Enforcement of Shariah Bill 1991 as reported by the Select Committee. The bill has been piloted by the minister of state for law, justice, and parliamentary affairs, Chaudhary Amir Hussain. The speaker, Mr. Gauhar Ayub Khan, disallowed the request by Syed Iftikhar Gilani to use his discretionary powers to defer the discussion till tomorrow to enable the leader of the opposition, Benazir Bhutto Sahiba, to open the debate from opposition. The speaker said had he received a written request from her, he would have exercised his constitutional powers to request the special court to allow her to attend the assembly session today.

The parliamentary party of the IJI [Islami Jamhoori Ittehad] at its meeting in Islamabad today discussed and endorsed the enforcement of Shariah Bill. The meeting which lasted about three hours was chaired by the prime minister, Mr. Nawaz Sharif, who is also president of the IJI.

Sharif Supports Bill

BK1305122091 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1100 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] The parliamentary party of the IJI [Islami Jamhoori Ittehad] at its meeting in Islamabad today endorsed the enforcement of Shariah Bill. Speaking on the occasion, the prime minister, Mr. Nawaz Sharif, who is also the president of the IJI, said Shariah Bill is the result of concerted efforts of the working group which included members of parliament, jurists, 'ulema, and lawyers. He said elected government is fully aware of the sentiments and aspirations of the masses and they have formulated the bill keeping in view these sentiments.

The prime minister said the government had already decided on the package of legislations to eliminate corruption, drug trafficking, and arms smuggling, besides ensuring speedy and inexpensive justice and establishing baitul mal [public fund]. The package would reflect true spirit of the Shariah Bill.

Assembly Ends Discussion

BK1405121891 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 14 May 91

[Excerpts] The National Assembly today concluded general discussion on the enforcement of Shariah Bill as reported by the select committee. Winding up general discussion, the minister of state for law, justice and parliamentary affairs, Chaudhry Amir Hussain, said with this bill, the IJI [Islami Jamhoori Ittehad] has fulfilled the promise it made to the electorate at the time of election.

Replying to points raised by members during discussion, he dispelled apprehensions of certain sections of population, including women and minorities, and assured that their full rights as envisaged in Islam would be protected. [passage omitted]

Earlier, the PDA [People's Democratic Alliance] opposition members staged a walkout before the beginning of the general discussion on the bill after being disallowed by the speaker to adjourn the session till this evening so that the leader of the opposition could initiate the debate on the bill. The speaker said he had not received any request from the leader of the opposition for adjournment of the house and that she would initiate the debate.

Sri Lanka

Reportage on Local Elections, Leaders' Views

President: People Rallying to UNP

BK0805124291 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 0521 GMT 8 May 91

["OANA/pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, 8 May (LANKAPUVATH)—President Ranasinghe Premadasa said on Monday [6 May] that the people had begun to consider the oncoming local polls as an opportunity of creating a new era of progress in the country and appealed to voters to ensure a people's victory on May 11.

"Policies of progress followed by the United National Party [UNP] have drawn us increased confidence from the masses, enabling us to seek their mandate to be appointed to local bodies. This cannot be done by opposition parties such as the SLFP [Sri Lanka Freedom Party], CP [Communist Party], and LSSP [Lanka Sama Samaja Party] as the people are fully aware of the deal they afforded the masses following their past victories", he said. The president was speaking at a UNP election rally at the Panadura town on Monday evening.

"The consequences of defeating the UNP in 1956, 1960 and 1970 still linger in people's minds, making them resolve never to repeat it. Today, they have begun rallying round the UNP in vast numbers, knowing well that ours is a party which never subjects them to discrimination on political and social grounds", he said.

The president said the language policy followed by the new government of 1956 had given rise to a conflict in the north and east, seriously hampering peace and harmony which prevailed in those regions earlier. This was one consequence of defeating UNP, he said.

He said the people still remembered the era of queues during the SLFP regime. They went to the extent of using emergency powers to prohibit the consumption of rice on Tuesdays and Fridays. Those who violated this regulation were punished. Even the transportation of two measures of rice was prohibited. Similar restrictions applied to chilies, onions, sugar and other commodities. Those who attempted to outwit the UNP by promising two free measures of rice to the people, ended up by denying the masses what they already enjoyed.

It was the duty of parents to enlighten their young in regard to the hardships they suffered, the president said.

Referring to the future activities of some of the opposition parties, the president said the teachings of Marxism expounded by some local leftists had in recent times been condemned even in Eastern Europe. While some leaders of the left still tried in vain to influence public opinion, many of their former disciples had gathered round the UNP.

The president said that to give justice to all sections of Lankan society, the government had given prominence to all faiths and their practices—Buddhist, Christian, Hindu and Islam. Steps had been taken for the promotion of correct values in society. "We recall the JVP's [Janata Vimukthi Peramuna's] declarations on seeking social justice through the rule of weapons. The present administration has rule of weapons. The present administration has truly afforded the people the justice they desire, utilising the strength it derived through the people's mandate. "I appeal to the voters to strengthen us further through the local government elections, allowing us to serve them even better in the future", the president said.

Bandaranaike Denounces Government

BK0805121691 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 0600 GMT 7 May 91

["Oana/pool item"]

[Text] Colombo, 8 May (LANKAPUVATH)—In order to settle the situation in the north, the president had appealed to the people to vote the UNP [United National Party] into power in the local government polls. She could not understand him. The president could easily enter into a dialogue with the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] and resolve this long standing issue. There was a sinister outlook in postponing talks and as a result, thousands of lives were lost, said Mrs. Bandaranaike, leader of the opposition. She was addressing an election meeting at Karawanella on Saturday [4 May]. The meeting was attended by party supporters from Ruwanwella, Yatiyantota and Deraniyagala electorates.

Mrs. Bandaranaike said the failure of the UNP to honour the pledges given to the late Mr Amirthalingam during the 1977 hustings led to the uprising in the north and other parts of the country. Further, the open economy of the government had deprived the farmers of the north of a stable income. These were some of the contributory factors for the present unsettled conditions in the country, to which the UNP government had failed to find a solution.

She said the UNP had slated the SLFP [Sri Lanka Freedom Party] for uniting with other left parties, and had also said that since it was unable to face the elections alone it was compelled to do so. This is far from the truth. The majority of the local government elections were contested on the party symbol, while some areas were being covered by candidates of the United Front. If it was correct for the UNP candidates to contest under the cock symbol which belonged to Mr. Thondaman's CWC [Ceylon Workers Congress] there was nothing wrong in some areas being covered by the United Front.

She said the SLFP was able to secure six seats in the northeast due to cordial relations that existed with the people of that area. During her rule, people were free to walk from Dondra to Point Pedro without any hindrance. But now the situation was just the opposite. The SLFP was confident that it was the only party that could harness the support of the people of the north and east to end the current conflict.

Security Tightened

BK0905115491 Colombo International Service in English 1045 GMT 9 May 91

[Text] The government has issued instructions to the Inspector General of Police to tighten security in all the 17 districts in which local government elections are being conducted with a view to preventing various youth (?interested) parties and extremist groups from disrupting the local government elections by committing acts of violence, driving fear into the minds of people, and the free movement of disruptive gangs. This includes the security of all polling stations and providing protection to the voters.

The members of public have been alerted to be extra vigilant with regard to strangers, armed gangs, and the possible use of explosive devices. Consequently, instructions have been issued to all police stations to establish checkpoints to check all vehicular traffic for arms and explosives. The police will also be on the look out of thugs and trouble makers likely to masquerade at voters. Members of the public are requested to excuse the law

enforcing authorities for any inconvenience caused to them in the process. All these measures are being taken to safeguard life and property and for the protection of the voters.

Update on Voting

BK1105121891 Colombo International Service in English 1045 GMT 11 May 91

[Text] The voting in the local government election, which commenced at 0700 [0130 GMT] this morning in 7,499 polling booths, ended at 1600 today. Eleven recognized political parties and 82 independent groups fielded nearly 16,000 candidates. A notable feature was that 6,000 of those contesting the local government election were youth candidates.

A senior police official in charge of security arrangements for the polls told SLBC [Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation] this morning that a peaceful atmosphere prevailed in and all activities with regard to the election were proceeding smoothly. The voting was held under the proportional representative system.

Representatives from Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, India, Pakistan, Nepal, and UK and the Philippines are now in the island to observe the conduct of the election. The counting of votes will start immediately after all the ballot boxes are brought to the counting centers. The counting, including the counting of postal votes, will take place in 1,070 centers.

[Hong Kong AFP in English at 1114 GMT on 11 May carries a Colombo datelined item which reads: "Polling closed after nine hours Saturday in Sri Lanka's local government elections outside the embattled north-eastern region, amid opposition charges of vote rigging, officials said. The main opposition Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) said there were several instances of organised rigging in the suburbs of Dehiwala and Mount Lavinia. However, police and election officials said there had been no major complaints of rigging or election-related violence during balloting to elect 236 local bodies.

["Sixty-five to 70 per cent of the 8.9 million electorate turned out to vote, an election official said after their preliminary estimates. The turn out at the last general election in February 1989 was less than 70 per cent. The first results were to be known Sunday, but the complete outcome will be announced Monday, officials said. The election is not being held in the northern and eastern regions where security forces are continuing a drive against the dominant Tamil guerrilla group, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

["Some 40,000 police, backed by some 30 anti-riot squads were deployed in the rest of the country to ensure peace during the voting while 75,000 public servants conducted the balloting.

["The ruling United National Party were the favourites while opposition groups have said they were determined to capture power in the local bodies."]

UNP Heading for 'Landslide'

BK1205140291 Colombo International Service in English 1045 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] The United National Party [UNP], having won the confidence of the people, is heading for a landslide victory in the local government elections. A significant feature of this election is the tremendous number of votes polled by the UNP in rural areas. This election has demonstrated that the Gamudawa Program which works on the concept of developing the country by improving the village has been successful. It also shows that the rural folk have approved the poverty alleviation program launched through the Janasaviya Program. The urban population throughout the country have endorsed the policies of the present government by voting overwhelmingly for the UNP. Political analysts say the urban population has wholeheartedly approved the transformation in the country's cities provided with all common amenities and essential services. This landslide victory amply demonstrates the people's approval of President Ranasinghe Premadasa's policies for establishing democracy and the efforts made to eliminate violence and bring about peace and prosperity. Eighty percent of the population in areas where violence reigned supreme have exercised their votes. This should be considered a personal victory for the president because these elections have demonstrated that these people are ("interested) in the democratic system. Political analysts say that the population has overwhelmingly supported rapid economic development, the lowering of the cost of living by controlling inflation even amid the war situation in the north and east, the provision of employment based on qualification, and establishing of code of ethics not only for government officials but also for parliamentarians and ministers on significant issues.

Foreign news agencies have claimed that the ruling UNP is heading for a virtual clean sweep in local government elections, seen as a test of strength for President Ranasinghe Premadasa's two-year-old government. REUTER said that the UNP was ahead of its closest rival—the Sri Lanka Freedom Party. The international community could understand that this election shows that Sri Lanka is a country marching toward peace and could attract more foreign aid and investment.

The Ministry of Defense says reports received from police authorities indicate that polling in all 17 districts was concluded at 1600 yesterday. The government appreciates the exemplary manner in which the public had conducted themselves, ensuring a smooth and incident-free election. A 75 percent voter turnout has been reported.

President: 'Democracy Has Triumphed'

BK1305142091 Colombo International Service in English 1045 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] President Ranasinghe Premadasa as the leader of the United National Party [UNP] in a special statement issued at the conclusion of the local government election has said that democracy has triumphed, and once again the people have exercised their sovereignty through the ballots. A large majority of the people have reaffirmed their trust and confidence in the new vision and the new zeal of UNP. The voters have convincingly rejected political elements masquerading as democrats. The activities of the local authorities affect the life of our people more closely. They have accepted the UNP as a means to improve the quality of the life.

The president has said that the decentralization of powers and functions together with resources will be expedited. The newly-elected local authorities will be entrusted with the important roles to accelerate all development efforts. He said that the UNP is determined to eliminate poverty through janaseviya [welfare program].

The president emphasized that the people have placed their trust and confidence in the party to renew and revitalize the unity of all sections of our motherland. He said that a nation divided is a nation weakened. The message is clear that national issues must be settled by national consensus through consultation, rather than through confrontation. He said that when the voter turnout is large, the triumph of the UNP is beyond doubt. The president said that they accepted (?victory) with humility and with dedication to service. Those who contested will be treated as friends, not as enemies. They will be considered partners in the democratic process. He said that victors are to protect the vanquished. He also said the democratic [words indistinct] of the UNP must not be mistaken for weakness. All are welcome to join in progress, and constructive criticism will be appreciated. Impeding progress is a national crime.

Emergency Rules Reimposed

BK1205120491 Colombo International Service in English 1045 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] A news release issued by the Defense Ministry says in order to ensure the maintenance of law and order in the aftermath of elections, emergency regulations that were revoked during the period of elections have been reintroduced with effect from midnight yesterday. In terms of these regulations, no processions whatsoever will be permitted. In addition, incitement, display of slogans, meetings, unlawful assembly, and other provocative actions likely to lead to a breach of the peace are prohibited.

The police have been given instructions to ensure that these regulations are strictly enforced. Members of the public have been requested to continue to conduct themselves in such a manner in which the rights and privileges of all citizens, winners and losers alike, are safeguarded and that law and order is maintained.

British Ambassador Accused of 'Interference'

BK1205041691 Hong Kong AFP in English 0410 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] Colombo, May 12 (AFP)—Sri Lanka's ruling party has accused the British high commissioner (ambassador) here, David Gladstone, of interfering in local government elections in the country, a state-run newspaper said Sunday.

The SUNDAY OBSERVER said Mr. Gladstone complained to police in southern Sri Lanka that ruling United National Party (UNP) supporters were erasing the "indelible" ink on their fingers to vote more than once.

UNP Secretary General Sirisena Cooray had lodged a protest with the Colombo Foreign Office and the elections commissioner over Mr. Gladstone's "improper conduct" and "interference in domestic politics," the newspaper said.

It said the envoy had "deliberately chosen" to make his complaint in Dikwella town, the constituency of a UNP MP, H.R. Piyasiri, who last year in parliament accused Mr. Gladstone of giving patronage to drug pedlars.

The party secretary general alleged that Mr. Gladstone "deliberately chose Dikwella as the venue for his complaint as an act of revenge against Mr. Piyasiri and to bring the UNP campaign in Mr. Piyasiri's area to disrepute."

Neither Mr. Gladstone nor the British High Commission here were immediately available for comment.

The UNP is comfortably leading in Saturday's local government elections and has secured 62 out of 65 councils declared so far.